

# ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

## CONTENTS

*page*

5	<b>Folk Tales</b>
14	<b>A Local Library</b>
18	<b>Soviet and British Philosophers Meet</b>
20	<b>History Conference</b>
25	<b>Central Asian Diary</b>
31	<b>Economic Developments</b>
39	<b>A Personal Visa</b>
40	<b>Renewing Acquaintance with Soviet Defectology</b>
46	<b>Calendar</b>
50	<b>SCR News</b>
53	<b>Book Reviews</b>
64	<b>AGM</b>

# SCR

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# THE ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL

JANUARY 1970

## *Editorial*

The valuable work of the Society, which is in part reflected in the columns of this Journal, will be much enhanced by two major decisions taken at the last Council meeting. Now that the library has its wide ranging collection of books properly shelved, in the new premises, for the first time for five years, it is possible to arrange for them to be completely catalogued and for catalogues to be issued to members. Space for another 5,000 volumes exists and this means that the stock of books now held can be maintained and developed for some years to come. In addition the equally valuable holding of visual aids and art history has been properly housed and developments of it planned. The demand from teachers (and especially from intending teachers in Colleges of Education) for visual aids for projects on the Soviet Union has always been great and constantly grows. The Society's

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resources are almost the sole means to meet these demands.

We welcome in this issue an article by Mr. Riordan as a token of respect for that great man known to millions of Russian children as Uncle Chukasha, Kornei Chukovsky, who died at the end of October at the age of 87. It was noted in a series of three obituary notes in *The Times* that he was the last living link with a great Russian literary generation. A visit to the Rossia Cinema in Moscow two years ago, that was packed by an audience of children by age or spirit to worship his genius expressed in the film *Dr. Aibolit*, will ever remain one of many warm memories of him.

The next issue will, in the main, be devoted to mark the centenary of Lenin's birth.

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# Russian Folk Tales

J. W. Riordan

This is an expanded version of a smaller article published in the November issue of *British-Soviet Friendship*.

In October, 1969, Dyada Chukasha died at the age of 87. Yet few of his millions of youth readers will appreciate the sad fact. For Kornei Chukovsky always seemed as immortal as the beloved characters he created, like *Dr. Aibolit* and *Barmolai*.

English literature owes him special gratitude for bringing many English and American writers into the homes and even the hearts of his fellow countrymen, especially the children. Among the classics that are now firm favourites with Soviet children, due to Chukovsky's sensitive translation, are Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Kipling's *Jungle Book* and *Just So Stories*, Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* and Hugh Lofting's *Dr. Doolittle* (whom Chuhovsky adopted as *Dr. Aibolit* in his own adventures).

It is to the merit of Soviet writing that the best English children's literature is translated by accomplished Soviet children's writers with established reputations in their own right as, for example, Chukovsky, Marshak, Mikhailov and Alexei Tolstoy. Rarely have we in England returned the compliment; here professional translators often do a competent job, but are unable to evoke the mood of the original that gives it its magical appeal to children. Like the Kremlinologists who are, of course, experts on every aspect of Soviet life, the all-purpose translator tends to be a "jack of all trades and a master of none".

One exception to this has been Arthur Ransome, famous for his children's book, *Swallows and Amazons*. Ransome went to Russia in 1913 to study Russian folklore and, after travelling widely in the country despite the troubled times, returned five years later to retell a delightful volume of Russian folk tales in his *Tales of Old Peter*.

Certainly for those who delve into Russian children's literature, particularly the folklore, there are as rich and exciting tsardoms to discover as Chuhovsky found in English tales. One would hope that a tribute to his memory might be for us in England to bring more of the gems of Russian children's literature into English, thereby enriching the lives of our own children.

## Tradition of Folk Tales

The folk tales of the Russian people are part of a heritage unparalleled in the oral literature of the world. No other nation has preserved by word of mouth such an exuberance of proverbs and sayings (*poslovitsy*, *pogovorki*), riddles (*zagadki*), spells (*zagovory*), lyrical and historical songs (*liricheskiye*, *istoricheskiye pesni*), topical comic songs (*chastushki*), laments (*prichitaniya*), heroic poems (*bylini*) and the folk tales (*skazki*). At a time when modern life had not yet spread into the remotest corners of the countryside, storytelling was a favourite pastime and entertainment in the quietness and monotony of the long winter country evenings. Even today, the art of the *skazochnik* is not lost and Soviet children are likely to have greater communion with folk tales as a living tradition than most children of other modern industrial societies.

There exist in English several books of Russian folk tales, some of which are mentioned below. For bolder spirits who want to read the originals, they will find them a valuable source of popular and colloquial language. Further, they open up a new field of Russian literature, provide a keen insight into Russian social history and the values and attitudes of the Russian people reflected in their folklore.

## Language

For hundreds of years the intrinsic richness of the Russian language, its structure and music has been preserved by the people and passed down by word of mouth in folk tales. It was only in the middle of the last century, however, that the first serious written records were made of Russian folk tales, many of which date back beyond the invention of written language itself. Pushkin, who himself set to verse several folk stories heard from his childhood nurse, wandering storytellers and blind pedlars at the Svyatagorsk monastery, highly appreciated the value of the folk language: "Nowhere but in folk tales can one find such freedom of Russian language. How can one learn Russian if not through folk tales? How marvellous they are. Each one is a poem".

Other eminent writers were not slow to take advantage of the licence afforded them by the language and imagery of folk themes. But it is particularly the first systematic collections of Afanasiev, who wrote down folk tales as recounted to him by local country people, that best preserve the language of the original.

In folk tales the language tends to be popular (and, as such, is a creditable source of Russian peasant speech) and therefore differs from standard literary Russian. Popular syntax, however, widely influenced the literary style of the foremost Russian writers.

Like the folk tales of other peoples, Russian tales have their idiosyncratic vocabulary and grammatical structures. Afanasiev referred to these characteristic and generally-accepted formulae as



"folk tale rites"; others call them the "folk tale canon". The tales usually begin and end with special *priskazki* (a *nachin* or *zachin* and *kontsovka*). For example, a common postscript is to affirm that the *skazochnik* was witness to the tale, drank mead which flowed down his chin without entering his mouth.

Certain conventional phrases indicate transfer from one subject to another ("whether they were long on their way I cannot say" or "it is quicker to tell the tale than do the deed": ("skoro **skazka** skazyvayetsa chem delo delayetsa")); stock descriptions exist for a whole range of actions: saddling a horse, the hero's journey, the hut on hen's legs, the first words of *Koshchéi* or *Baba Yagá* on the hero's arrival ("*tam russki dukh, tam Rusyu pakhnyet*"); stock epithets abound ("*dremuchi lyes*", "*yasen sokol*", "*kosoi zayets*", "*drobry kon*") etc. Further, many tales feature a trinomial rule; three daughters or sons, three tasks, three wishes, a three-headed snake, or a multiple of three, e.g. "*za tridevyat zemel*" is "at the ends of the earth".

## Literature

The folk tale is rightly regarded in Russian as being part of the common heritage of classical literature and principally a work of art in its own right. Both in recorded peasant versions and in the renditions of the great Russian writers, the folk tale was often on a par with other monuments of world poetry and prose. Certainly, among the finest examples of Russian poetry are Pushkin's "Tale of the Fisherman and Little Fish", "Tale of the Golden Cockerel", "Tale of Tsar Sultan" and "Tale of the Dead Queen and the Seven Knights"; Yershov's "Little Humpbacked Horse" and Zhukovsky's "Sleeping princess".

Sergei Aksakov rewrote from memory "The Little Scarlet Flower", a Russian peasant version of "Beauty and the Beast", so often repeated to him by his old nurse. It is a perfect fairy tale of pure fantasy, distilling the wisdom, innocence and charming simplicity of ancient Russian folklore. Lev Tolstoy used simple folk tales, like "The Three Bears" and "Tom Thumb" (*Lipunushka*), in the primers he wrote for serf children in the school he founded on his estate in Yasnaya Polyana. And Gogol introduces several Ukrainian folk tales in "Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka".

Gorky, whose early tales and legends are perhaps his greatest masterpieces, records his debt to the fairy stories read to him as a young boy by his wonderful *babushka*: "People flew through the air on magic carpets, traversed the land in Seven League Boots, resurrected the dead by sprinkling them with the water of life, built palaces overnight; these stories reveal to me a ray of hope for another life where a free fearless power prevailed and people aspired to a better existence".

Soviet writers have continued the folk tradition. Alexei Tolstoy produced a charming Russian version of Pinocchio (whom he called *Buratino*); Marshak, Chukovsky and Mikhailov have brought to the Soviet reader some of the best world folk tales including England's "The Three Pigs" and "Jack and the Beanstalk" (not to mention such children's favourites as Winnie the Pooh, Alice in Wonderland, Peter Pan, the Jungle Book and Just-So Stories). Bazhov has recorded the legends of Urals miners in such colourful tales as "The Stone Flower" and "The Maid of the Copper Mountain".

Folk tales are, of course, a ready medium for political allegory and diffused social comment. And, as such, they have long provided an attraction for Russian writers in their running battle with the censor. Not that the ploy is always successful. Pushkin's satire on the clergy, in his folk tale "The Priest and His Workman Balde", was too explicit to gain publication in his lifetime. It was first published four years after his death as "The Merchant Ostolop and His Workman Balde" and was only restored to its authentic version some forty years later. And the implicit political barbs in the fairy tales of Yevgeny Schwarz earned him a place in a Stalin labour camp. Conversely, folk themes, like the subject matter of history and war, provide an escape to a less controversial realm for authors in a rather disciplined literary world and obviate the need to deal with contemporary topics.

## History

A nation's folklore is an integral part of its history and frequently regional stories give a keener insight into national and local characteristics than many learned treatises that official historians write. The history written in terms of kings and queens, politicians and generals largely ignores the contribution and everyday life of the common people. As Gorky once put it "Folklore has its own view of the actions of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great. And its view sharply differs from the valuations of scholars little interested in what the struggle between the monarch and the feudal barons meant for the ordinary people". Certainly peasant and soldier opinion in folk tales of the tsar, lord, priest and merchant, and even of themselves, is a useful supplement to, though not infrequently at odds with, the official history books.

Meanwhile, the nature of the country and its historical past have much bearing on its folklore. The rather macabre and gloomy stories of the harsh North contrast with the sunnier tales of the South; the mining of malachite and emeralds in the Ural Mountains naturally evinces a different mood than does living off sea or river or the trapping of furs in the Siberian taiga.

Some folk themes and characters clearly belong to early Slavonic

days, before the coming of the Varangians in the ninth century. The multifarious spirits, like the *domovoi* and *vodyanoi*, the evil *Baba Yagá* and *Koshchei Bessmertny* are without doubt as ancient as the early Russian tribes. Other themes originate in the early Middle Ages, before Russia's intercourse with the West was halted by the Tartar-Mongol invasions in the thirteenth century; thus, centres such as Novgorod and Pskov produced variations on universally known folk themes: Puss in Boots, Tom Thumb, The Three Bears, and Little Gingerbread Man. Some time later, the predilection of Russian aristocracy for foreign, particularly French, culture brought a new crop of folk themes such as "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Sleeping Beauty".

### Social Values

Folklore, like traditional games, reflects values immanent in a particular culture and at the same time serves to teach certain cultural values and attitudes. Popular ideals of justice, honour, beauty, truth and diligence are identified with folk heroes. The stories express the life and experience of the people, their philosophy down the years, as they fight for survival in internecine warfare and against internal and external tyranny, as they bear the burden of serfdom, as they struggle for emancipation and dream of a better future. Like the Negro spirituals, the Russian folk tales often express the aspirations of a superstitious and oppressed people seeking a more happy and just life. Significantly, the Russian peasant shows himself through the folk tales to be compassionate, and resigned to his fate, devoted to duty, extremely brave in facing suffering and death, and doggedly fatalistic.

Russian folklore indicates that age-old superstitions tormented the Russian peasant's soul. He gladly sought a supernatural explanation of the smallest event in his life. Even his religion was less a moral issue than a mystery. It was not in obedience to the precepts of Christianity that he was patient, docile, hospitable and charitable, but from a natural disposition to be indulgent. Wherever he turned the universe seemed to him peopled with good or evil spirits who hide in the chimney, under the soil or amongst the beams of his house. Their leader is the *domovoi*, old and dishevelled, with a hairy body and a tail. He protects the family, shares in its daily life, amuses himself in provoking a sleeper's snores, tangling a flirtatious woman's hair, hiding the master's boots, maddening the chickens and breaking the leg of a bench; but on the other hand he heals the sick and appeases domestic quarrels. His comrade in the farmyard is the *dvorovoi*, the one in the stable the *konyushennik* and the one in the bath-house the *bannik*. The girls will question the *bannik* about their future while they expose their naked backs to him through the half-open door at midnight; if he scratches

them they can expect the worst, and if he strokes them life will be sweet.

In the forest lives the *leshi*, a spirit with a bluish skin, protruding eyes and long hair. This spirit protects criminals, imitates birdsong and wanders through his realm laughing, whistling and clapping his hands. A mocking creature, he often amuses himself by leading men astray in the woods. To counter his tricks one has to wear one's jacket back to front and put one's left boot on the right foot. The *vodyanoi* is the spirit of the waters. Every river and stream has its own spirit, old, hideous and green bearded. When he is well disposed, he is pleased to guide the fish into the fisherman's net. But if he is in a bad temper, he tears the traps and the lines, raises storms, sinks ships and smashes dikes. When he is drunk he makes the rivers overflow. In the depths of the waters also live the *rusalki*, or water nymphs, lovely naked girls with skin the colour of moonlight, silken hair and emerald eyes. They so charm the passers-by with their laughter and songs that some of them will drown themselves for the *rusalki*'s sake. The *Baba Yagá* is a wicked hook-nosed witch who moves about, seated on a mortar, with a pestle in her right hand to force a way, and a broom in her left hand to sweep away the traces of her passage. As all Russian children know, she lives in a revolving hut mounted on hen's legs and without doors or windows. A terrible black cat lives in its yard.

The most common everyday articles are endowed with magical properties—a doll, flower, spindle, piece of thread—are suddenly bewitched. Oak trees whisper warnings, mills and cemeteries are best avoided at night, a saucepan may offer advice, and a purpose or threat may be gleaned from elm brushwood. When all these superstitions and wonders are translated into folk tales, they fall naturally into place because the storyteller and the audience believe every word.

### Three Genres

There are three main genres of Russian folk tale: the fairy tale, animal story and everyday life story.

The first is imbued with fantasy and mystical elements where the main heroes and heroines are princes and princesses, and the villains are figures from Russian peasant myth, like *Baba Yagá* and *Koshchei Bessmertny*. Pushkin's prologue to *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, *Lukomorye*, lists many of them: Sometimes the fairy tale has a "wandering theme" which is common to the folklore of other countries: "The Firebird" is analogous to Grimm's "The Golden Bird", "Lipunushka" to "Tom Thumb", "Fenist the Bright-eyed Falcon" to Grimm's "The Lady and the Lion", "The Little Scarlet Flower" to "Beauty and the Beast", etc. Blended, filtered and recreated through Russian idiom and imagery, they emerge as

unmistakenly Russian in flavour and content. The story is normally told starkly with fantastic embroideries, and rarely contains an explicit moral.

In the animal stories, the characters are treated as rational beings with their own names and patronymics. Ironically, few human figures in any genre of folk tale are treated in such a personal way. It is typical of the Russian folk tale that in Tolstoy's "Three Bears", the little girl (Goldilocks in English, Bouclés d'Or in French) is simply *devochka*, while the bears are *Mikhail Ivanych*, *Nastasia Petrovna* and *Mishutka*. In other stories the fox is usually *Lizaveta Patrikeyevna* (I have not been able yet to trace her Irish parentage!), the cat *Kotofei Ivanych*, the goat *Kozma Mikitich*, the bear *Mikhail Ivanych Toptygin*, and the cock *Petya*. Each is distinguished by a certain characteristic: the cat is wise, the fox cunning and a gossip, the bear stupid, the cock fearless, the goat innocent and the wolf voracious.

The third group of folk tales concern everyday life and feature peasants and soldiers, priests and merchants, wise men and fools. Rarely do the characters have Christian names; the most usual appellation is King, Queen, Lord, Priest, Pedlar, Deacon, Soldier or Peasant. In this dream world it is the poor that invariably get the better of the rich, the powerless triumph over the powerful, the fool over the wise man. Authority is lampooned in comical and satirical vein. The story is told for what it is worth, sometimes baldly and starkly, and once again frequently with fantastic overtones. A number of these tales, particularly the abundant soldiers' and priests' tales, take the form of bawdy anecdotes, where the priest or the deacon are caught with their trousers down (or cassocks up) in a compromising tussle with the muzhik's wife. Not unnaturally few such tales evaded the censor. Afanasiev, however, managed to smuggle out a colourful collection and had them published anonymously in Geneva in the middle of the last century.

## References to Folk Tale Literature

The most important collection of Russian folk tales is undoubtedly that made by Alexander Afanasiev in eight volumes, published between 1855 and 1863. It contains well over 600 tales including different versions of the same story. The most recent edition of Afanasiev's collection was brought out in Moscow in 1957 in three volumes. Other more recent volumes of Russian folk tales in Russian (most of which can be obtained from Collet's) are:

*Lukomorye*, compiled by I. Halturin, Moscow 1969.

*Russkiye Narodniye Skazki*, compiled by N. Savushkina, Moscow 1965.

*Russkiye Narodniye Skazki*, compiled by A. Negayev, Moscow 1964.

*Russkaya Satiricheskaya Skazka*, compiled by D. Moldavsky, Moscow 1955.

*Ladushki*, Moscow 1969.

And individual, well-illustrated stories : *Tsarevna Lyagushka* and *Fenist Yasen Sokol*, Moscow 1969.

For a general account of Russian folklore and translations of Russian folktales in English :

*Russian Folklore*, by Y. M. Sokolov, Folklore Associates : Hatboro, Pennsylvania, 1966.

*Russian Tales and Legends*, retold by Charles Downing, O.U.P., 1968.

*Tales of Old Peter*, retold by Arthur Ransome, Nelson.

*Vasilisa the Beautiful*, Progress Publishers, Moscow.

*The Maid of the Copper Mountain*, Pergamon, 1969 (translated by J. W. Riordan).

*Russian Fairy Stories*, retold by E. M. Almedingen, Muller.

*Russian Folk Tales*, translated by N. Duddington.

*Folk Tales of the Peoples of the Soviet Union*, translated by Gerard Shelley (Herbert Jenkins, 1945).

### Editorial Note

Mr. Riordan has edited various collections of Russian folk tales in Russian and translated collections into English (e.g. *The Maid of the Copper Mountain*, mentioned in the bibliography above).

We print below his translation of Pushkin's short poem, *Lukomorye*, which includes many of the Russian folk characters.

### THE CURVING STRAND

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

By curving strand an oak tree green  
Supports a chain of golden sheen,  
A wise old cat prowls stealthily;  
To the right he treads — a song to wail,  
To the left — he tells a tale.

Wonders abound : a woodsprite flits,  
A mermaid in the branches sits;  
And there amid the trampled ferns  
Lie trails of beasts of yore;  
A little hut on hen's legs turns;  
No windows or a door.  
There, forest and dale in marvels abound;  
At dawn waves swish in gentle sound,  
Dancing lightly in rippled ring,  
And thirty handsome heroes leap

In turn from glistening waters deep  
Chasing the demon river king.  
There, a bold young prince comes swiftly riding  
Hard on the heels of an evil tsar;  
There, in the clouds a wizard is hiding  
Ready to seize a noble boyár  
And carry him over the steppe afar.  
In a dungeon deep a princess pines,  
A big grey wolf his captive minds;  
There, Baba Yagá in a mortar looms  
Sweeping her traces away with her brooms;  
There, Koshchéi Bessmértny hoards his gold,  
There's Russian blood . . . there's Rus so old !  
And I was there, I drank mead ale,  
Under the green oak tree I sat  
And listened while the wise old cat  
Told me this ancient fairy tale . . .  
translated by J. W. RIORDAN

# A Local Library

*Ilya Gitlits*

(A Novosti correspondent)

I decided to make a small experiment in setting out to find the Krasnogorsk district library in Moscow region. I asked ten different people in turn, whom I met on the street, for the address of the library. Five of them were able to give it to me exactly; three did not know the address but were able to tell me how to find it and only two had no idea where it was to be found. This brief enquiry suggests that 8 out of 10 inhabitants of Krasnogorsk know of the existence of their district library.

There are in fact 48 libraries in Krasnogorsk district. Of these 18 are located in various housing blocks, 7 are trade union libraries, 22 form part of educational institutions and 1 is the district library. This does not mean to say that every one of the 106,000 inhabitants of this district may obtain books at any of these. Books may be borrowed from the local libraries situated in housing blocks only by the people living in these blocks. The trade union library, for example, in the Krasnogorsk Engineering Works, serves those who work there and members of their family, and the library at the medical school caters for its own staff and students. The district library, however, provides books for everyone in the district.

It has 6,000 registered readers of whom 4,635 borrow books to read at home, and 1,365 use its comfortable reading room. The library has a total stock of 47,000 books, including fiction and non-fiction. In addition it takes 20 different newspapers and 88 journals of a popular political, scientific and literary type. In the first 7 months of 1969 the library added 1,497 volumes to its stock and most of these were new books. The cost of acquisitions in 1968 came to 3,200 roubles. This, together with the cost of maintaining the library is met out of funds provided by the district soviet. No charge is made to the users of the library. The readers themselves help to decide on acquisitions. They can consult the classified catalogues of the various publishers which contain a short description of new books and their authors. Any reader can find out what new books are being published and recommend their acquisition. But I would not wish to mislead you—not all the recommendations are adopted. Nina Shibanova, the head librarian explained that “before we buy a book we have to consider a number of questions: to what group of people will the book appeal and will the interest in it be maintained?” When a recommendation is not adopted, how-



ever, the reader may nevertheless get the book through the district library. A book he wants can be obtained for him from the stock of any other Soviet library within the normal time limit of ten days.

An economist, Igor Grigoriev wanted a copy of the journal *The Fish News Review*, which was not in the local library. He was able to do this without cost of time or money because the Krasnogorsk librarians were able to get into touch, through the inter-library loan arrangements, with their colleagues in the Scientific Research Institute of the Fishing Industry to meet Grigoriev's request. In the first half of 1969, 500 similar requests by other readers were met.

"Every reader is a mystery"; these are the first words of a poem entitled "The Reader", by the famous Russian poetess, Anna Akhmatova. There are then, 6,000 such mysteries in Krasnogorsk. But nevertheless we do know something about the readers of the district library. More than a third of them are workers (2,459), 1,827 are students, 782 are engineers and technicians, 300 teachers, and half the readers are between 16 to 30 years of age.

I asked the librarians if there were any connection between the kind of books their readers were interested in and the jobs in which they were employed, their age, sex and standard of education. Their records show that young people aged between 16 and 20 are the most avid readers. They borrow more than 20 books a year on average, which is 3 more than the average for other readers. I asked a number of people present in the library how much time they devoted to reading. Their answers varied from 3 to 40 hours a week. Serafima Mishenskaya, who is 80, told me she spends 12 hours a day reading! She had borrowed 260 books during 1968.

The tastes and interests of the readers are as varied as the amount of time they devote to reading. There are of course some books in which literally everyone is interested. I must have heard asked during the day of my visit at least a hundred times, "Do you have Marshal Georgii Zhukov's Memoirs?" This has been possibly the book most in demand in recent times. The demand for classical and contemporary literature depends on many things. Sociologists reckon that television has distracted millions of readers from the printed word. The librarians here, however, believe that television has played a positive rôle in the formation of reading taste and directs the attention of readers to particular books. They quoted the example of the screening on the Central Television network of the film of Vyacheslav Shishkov's novel, *Ugrium Reka*. This novel was a great success with readers in the late 1940s. Once such a film appears on television the book disappears from the library shelves again. Fyodor Dostoyevsky's famous novel, *The Brothers Maramazov*, had a similar revival; when it appeared as a film the number of those who wished to re-read, or read it for the first time, suddenly increased a hundredfold. The demand for a book is also affected

by references to it in the press and the more controversial these are the greater is the number of people who want to read it. Anatolii Tishkin, a driver who was visiting the library, gave this as his reason for borrowing Lipatov's story, entitled *The Village Detective*. He said "a lot of good and bad things have been said about this book and I would like to make up my own mind about it".

The librarians here keep detailed records of the demand for books and some facts which they told me seemed interesting. There is a distinct increase in the demand for poetry, and this has occurred in the last 6 to 7 years. Some of the most popular poets are Sergei Yesenin, Robert Rozhdestvenskii, Yegor Isaev, Boris Pasternak, Nikolai Martynov, Eduard Mezhlaitis and Eduard Asadov.

There is considerable interest in foreign literature, especially English. The library has on its shelves books by more than 100 English authors. These include works by Shakespeare, Dickens, Byron, Goldsmith, Burns, Oscar Wilde, Sean O'Casey, A. J. Cronin, Jerome K. Jerome, Conan Doyle and Priestley. The majority of readers nowadays, however, prefer new authors to the recognised masters. Although Dickens, Conan Doyle and Cronin have their admirers the younger generation is more interested in the writings of John Osborne, Joyce Carey, Doris Lessing and especially John Braine, whose two books, *Room at the Top* and *Life at the Top* are among the most popular. They are constantly out on loan. It may be said that Braine's popularity is only equalled by Stan Barstow's novel *A Kind of Loving*.

I asked five people in the library what they liked reading and who were their favourite authors. Here are their replies. Aleksandr Rozet, a 60-year-old engineer, prefers memoirs and thought Shakespeare was his favourite author. Nelli Drugova, a 21-year-old student, loved books about human relations and preferred Paustovskii. Igor Kotelkin, a 16-year-old schoolboy, was fascinated with science fiction and liked Ray Bradbury. Anatolii Alekseyev, a 31-year-old driver, said he mostly read and liked works by Chekhov. Liudmila Morozova, an 18-year-old hairdresser, said she preferred to read what people thought about life and liked Gorkii.

The library frequently organises discussions among its readers, and meetings with writers, at which they can say what they think about the books. The discussions are attended by 200 to 300 people and last several hours. One of these was devoted to Vladimir Titov's story, *Vsem Smertyam Nazlo*. The author was a miner who met with an accident in which he lost both arms. The discussion was fiercely concentrated on whether the author was justified in showing his hero to be a weak man who, having fallen ill, begins to think of suicide and takes to drink. Several of those present spoke against the portrayal of such human weakness. Passions rise even

higher when the authors themselves take part in these discussions, and they are frequently invited by the Krasnogorsk library. Among those who have recently been there are Sergei Mikhailov, Lev Kassil, Antonina Koptayeva, Tatiana Nikolayeva and Vladimir Giller.

There are six librarians on the staff, for all of whom books are an essential part of their life. Nina Shibanova joined the library in 1942 "when the fascists were only 50 kilometers from our district". She knows all the readers, their tastes and interests. She is the most experienced of the librarians; her five colleagues all graduated from higher education institutions. Yelena Belova, Tatiana Arbuzova, and Liza Belnikina graduated at a College of Librarianship, whereas Zinaida Solonetskaya and Marina Bogdanova studied at the Institute of Culture.

There are 31 voluntary helpers in addition to the six members of staff. They run mobile libraries at their place of work, with books drawn from the library, on a voluntary basis for two or three hours a week. Some of these operate at local hospitals, militia points and local government offices. Antonina Ivanova runs a group of 45 readers who may not only exchange books with her but also order any book they need.

A love of reading is aroused in the inhabitants of Krasnogorsk from early childhood. There is a special library for children occupying three hundred square meters in one of the new seven storey blocks of flats. It has 40,628 books on its shelves, and there are 4,002 registered readers, boys and girls under 16 years of age. It is here that the young citizens first become acquainted with the magic world of books. They set out on a journey with the jolly tailor of the brothers Grimm, fight alongside the legendary Robin Hood and suffer in their hearts the sorrows of the wooden Buratino (Pinocchio). They told me that one young reader, when told of the grim forecast by Ray Bradbury that there would come a time when, thanks to television, people would not know how to read or write, cried out "I shall never watch television again".

One last fact remains; in 1968 the people in Krasnogorsk district spent 203,000 roubles on the purchase of books for their own private libraries.

*(This article was supplied by Novosti in response to our request provoked by a number of members who had asked for information about the work of local libraries in the Soviet Union.)*

# Soviet and British Philosophers Meet

*Bernard Harrison*

Since 1968 a dialogue has been going forward between groups of Soviet and British philosophers meeting under the auspices of The Friends Service Council (London) and the USSR-GB Society of Moscow. Last year four Soviet philosophers visited Britain and took part in a residential seminar at East Grinstead, as well as visiting a number of British universities.<sup>1</sup> This October a group of four British philosophers, including the writer, went to the Soviet Union for a similar conference. The main philosophical meetings took place in Tblisi, but the group spent several days in Moscow and Leningrad and made further contacts with philosophers in each place.

The main subject of discussion, as in the previous year, was ethics. British moral philosophy is commonly regarded by Marxists as unduly concerned with technical questions of a trivially verbal and "formal" character to the exclusion of matters of moral substance, although it should be said that it is not unknown for British philosophers to express rather similar qualms about the subject. It is thus pleasant to record that after some brief preliminary skirmishings the conference settled down to discuss a range of questions which seemed to both sides to involve moral issues of real importance, but also to lend themselves to genuinely philosophical techniques of argument and discussion. These questions had to do with the definition of morality and moral principles, the differences between morality and social custom, and the relationships between morals, social organisation and the historical development of society.

Agreement and disagreement in the discussions did not always run with the grain of nationality; and some, at least, of the British participants were frequently to be found defending views more or less similar to those held by some, at least, of the Soviet participants.

One point over which the two groups did remain almost uniformly in disagreement concerned the sense in which moral values can be said to be *derived from* the study of the process of historical development, and the related question of whether there can be quite different and incompatible systems of moral values, each in as

<sup>1</sup> An account of this meeting, by David Bell, Senior Lecturer in Logic at the University of Glasgow, and one of the participants, can be found in the Bulletin of the Great Britain-USSR Association, No. 23, Winter 1968-69.

good a sense as the others “justified by” the study of history. Most of the Soviet participants seemed prepared to agree that the connexion between a particular set of values and a set of historical truths could not be one of formal logical entailment, but they nonetheless wished to insist that the connexion was strong enough to exclude the possibility of equally valid alternative moralities. Had the meetings continued longer, this topic, and others which produced extremely interesting detailed discussion, would have been well worth pursuing further.

It was evident in this year's discussions, as in last year's, that Soviet philosophers often possess a far more detailed and accurate knowledge of the current English-speaking philosophical literature than British philosophers possess of Soviet work. None of us in the British group remained in any doubt that philosophical work of high technical competence and an intrinsic philosophical interest which transcends merely polemical considerations is at present being produced in the Soviet Union, and it is to be hoped that, with increasing contacts, the present British ignorance of Soviet developments will gradually be overcome. What is immediately needed, given the strikingly low level of linguistic attainment displayed by the British philosophical community (myself included) is for current Soviet philosophy to become available in English.

The Soviet participants in the Seminar were : *Lev N. Mitrokhin*, Head of the Department of Recent Western Philosophy, The Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow; *Oleg G. Drobnitsky*, Senior Research Worker in the Institute of Philosophy; *Nikolai Z. Chavchavadze*, Director, Institute of Philosophy, Georgian Academy of Sciences; *Archil F. Begiashvili*, Professor, University of Tbilisi; *Alexander A. Ivin*, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Moscow University. The British participants were : *David Bell*, University of Glasgow; *Bernard Harrison*, University of Sussex; *Ted Honderich*, University of London; and *Steven Lukes*, Balliol College, Oxford.

# History and the Historians

Some observations on the Anglo-Soviet Conference of Historians,  
London, September, 1969.

*Paul Dukes*

British and Soviet historians have generally found it difficult to come together in fact as well as in theory. The contacts established by such people as Bernard Pares from the one side, Paul Miliukov from the other, at the beginning of the century were broken by the Revolution of 1917, and the next official meeting did not take place until the International Congress of Historical Sciences in Rome in 1955. Practical obstacles have by no means disappeared, but since 1958 five Anglo-Soviet Conferences of Historians have taken place, two in Moscow and the third in London in September last. Efficiently run by Professor A. G. Dickens and the staff of the Institute of Historical Research, this most recent conference included well-received papers by R. H. Hilton on Medieval Peasant Rebellions, Academician A. A. Gouber and J. Lynch on Latin American Liberation Movements, B. Hollingsworth on the British Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, P. Zhilin on the Soviet Partisan Movement during the Second World War, and H. R. Kedward on French Communists and Resistance at the beginning of that war. All these papers were discussed with interest and much agreement.

Further discussion on two Soviet papers concerning Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century gave ample opportunity to see just how wide is the gulf that separates most British historians from their Soviet counterparts. An obvious enough way of indicating this is to make the observation that while the British tend to share the aspirations of Pares, the name of Miliukov and everything he stood for have become anathema to Soviet historians. Thus, in the Pares tradition, J. L. H. Keep forcefully argued that the road to parliamentary democracy could and should have been taken by Tsarist Russia in 1905. He regretted failure of the various opposition parties at that time to compose their differences and present a united front to autocracy. From the other side, K. P. Shatsillo and P. V. Volobuev ably put forward their view that the conditions in 1905 were completely unfavourable to the introduction into Russia of a system of government evolved in Great Britain over the course of several centuries. To them, to put it mildly, Miliukov and his fellow liberals were without a social basis sufficiently strong

for their middle way to have any chance of realisation. In a less stark manner, the great question of 1917, Kornilov or Lenin, was already posed. As well as disagreeing over broad issues such as this, Keep and his Soviet colleagues found themselves disagreeing over their approach to the detailed events of 1905. Presented with a long list of specific points, Shatsillo and Volobuev discussed most of them but continued to emphasise the conceptual shortcomings of their British opposite number. Such a cross purpose was evident in much of the other discussion at the Conference, in which many home delegates were unhappy about their visitors' fondness for broad generalisation, and the communists no doubt saw in their hosts' persistence with smaller issues at least some signs of "vulgar bourgeois factology". In such a manner, the difference between the two sides not only in 1969 but ever since 1917 was isolated.

For their part, since the First World War most British historians have been even more wary of ideology than the British empiricist tradition would suggest, for reasons clearly pointed out by E. H. Carr in his *What is History?* Up to the First World War, the idea of progress was expressly or tacitly accepted by most of them because Great Britain was progressing. The study of history was widely accepted as the most worthwhile training for those about to run the nation or the empire because of both its method and content. The years 1914-1918 formed a great divide, and the great blow that they gave to the British confidence was reflected in the disillusionment with the idea of progress expressed by British intellectuals such as Dean Inge in a Romanes Lecture. Historians retreated into what they declared to be a non-partisan search for the truth best pursued by the persistent accumulation of facts, now renamed evidence. Equipped with his evidence, the British historian rarely felt that it should be used to plead a case, more often that it should serve as ammunition to shoot down the case that anybody at home or abroad should be bold enough to put up. He derived his satisfaction from chit-chat in the common-room about who'd got what wrong in his footnotes, who was in or out, up or down, although truth as well as charity obliges the acknowledgement that exaggeration is used here to help make the essential point, and that British historiography in the last fifty years has been far from an arid desert.

There can be no doubt, however, that Soviet historians during the same half-century were made of sterner stuff. Errors for them could mean not only non-advancement but positive regression into dishonour, even death, but these were not the petty mistakes of scholarship but misconceptions concerning progress, revolutionary progress. After October 1917, with Miliukov and his like swept aside, history became one of the chief weapons in the struggle of the proletariat against world capitalism. Divergence from the

general line meant treason to the cause. Fifty years and more on, with the Soviet achievement crystal clear for anybody who can bear to see it, and fears for the survival of the workers' state much reduced, history, particularly recent history, is still a very serious business indeed in the Soviet Union. Its practitioners expend much of their energy on the presentation of ideological unity as well as an increasing amount of it in the pursuit of evidence. But for them, the case comes first, then the evidence used for it. By no means scorning the contribution of bourgeois scholarship, they scrutinise it as much for its conceptual errors as for the information that it presents

Having taken all too brief a glance at the state of the subject on both sides, we must now move on to the assertion that each of them is not without its merits. In support of this, we can cite Leopold von Ranke, whose plea for history "how it really was" has long been used in self-justification by western "factologists". Towards the end of his long career, Ranke wrote: "In my opinion, we must work in two directions: the investigation of the effective factors in historical events and the understanding of their universal relationship . . . The investigation of a single detail already requires profound and very penetrating study. At the present time, however, we are all agreed that the critical method, objective research, and synthetic construction can and must go together. Historical research will not suffer for its connection with the universal: without this link, research would become enfeebled and without exact research the conception would degenerate into a phantasm".

Applied to the all-important subject of the Russian Revolutions, Ranke's argument could lead to the request that Western historians should brush up their ideology and their Soviet counterparts their facts. How can Soviet writing about the great events of 1905 and 1917 be taken completely seriously while it ignores some of the major participants, incidents and arguments in those years? And how can Western writing about the Revolutions be of much use when it contains such attacks on them, when, to quote E. H. Carr, "plenty of people, who have suffered directly or vicariously from the results of the Bolshevik victory, or still fear its remoter consequences, desire to register their protest against it", and do so by attacks on the Revolutions disguised as objective scholarship with concealment of their ideological presuppositions. Of course, this could cut both ways as more explicitly does another statement of Carr's: "Much of what has been written in English-speaking countries in the last ten [fifty?] years about the Soviet Union, and in the Soviet Union about the English-speaking countries, has been vitiated by this inability to achieve even the most elementary measure of imaginative understanding of what goes on in the mind of the other party".



Few historians would not want now to achieve such “imaginative understanding”, but nearly all of them would agree that it is very elusive. How can they overcome their narrowness of outlook, their lack of sympathy for alien cultures? In such a pursuit, they might gain some encouragement and advice from one of the chief initiators of the Anglo-Soviet Conferences, Sir Charles Webster, who made the following still relevant remarks in 1923 : “The comparative method is exceedingly valuable to historians and above all to those concerned with the difficult task of surveying impartially contemporary history. Whatever view is held of the value of history as a means of understanding the present, it at least enables us to obtain a standpoint and a perspective which can be obtained in no other way. In this strange and momentous age when new and unknown sources of energy are moulding a world before our eyes so violently that civilisation is threatened with destruction, it may be that we can find in the past some fixed points on which to take our bearings. If we are careful to remember continually the immense changes between our own day and that of a hundred years ago, and to avoid the hypnotic influence which the history of great events , in which their country has shared, exercises on some individuals, we can, I think, obtain some help in the solution of the immense problems with which we are today confronted”.

To defeat the restrictions placed upon historians by time and place when they attempt to study the pasts of the Soviet or English-speaking peoples from the opposite side, Webster's recommendation of comparative history might be more specifically applied to the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Of course, there are great differences between the two, but the stories of their rise to super-power certainly bear comparison. Not only do they present variations of the basic modernisation process undergone first by Western European countries, their frontier situation in relation to these countries gives their variations further points of comparability. These must not be pushed too far; the influence of the landlocked eastern frontier must not be equated with that of the transoceanic western frontier. To take just one example, the centralised all-pervasive tradition of Russian government and the decentralised *laissez-faire* tradition of American government have been largely determined by such a divergence. Moreover, the comparative history of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. must not ignore such contrasts between them as the great importance of private capital in one system and its absence from the other.

If the convergence of the super-powers continues along the path recommended by A. D. Sakharov, as all sane and rational people in both East and West must surely hope, it is almost as important to see where the two have come from as where they are going. Simple geometry tells us that you cannot tell where lines of devel-

opment are going if you do not know the points of departure. And so history can be as useful as the social sciences, much more than the dry academic exercise it is often assumed to be, even by some of its practitioners. In such a huge task as the comparative history of the United States and the Soviet Union, British scholars can play an important part because their own society was the first to undergo much of the modernisation experienced later by the super-powers and has also been seen as a model of that process by Marx and others. They can only do this if they attempt dispassionate objectivity, and think about the loss of life in Vietnam at least as much as they think about the loss of freedom in Czechoslovakia. They must accept the proletarian revolution of the twentieth century and its aspirations as well as the bourgeois revolution of the eighteenth century and its aspirations. And they must take every opportunity of talking to their American and Soviet colleagues. Every sane and rational person knows that, as far as the prospects of man's survival are concerned, time is not on our side. In the historical sense, it can and must be.

# Central Asian Diary

*Robert Darglish*

## **On location**

On a track across flat, gravelly sand dotted with greenish-grey saksaul bushes that stretched away to the horizon, featureless save for a mirage-evoking salt marsh, two lorries had halted. One of them, which a motoring enthusiast might have identified as a Ford of 1932 pattern, had its engine cover up and two indescribably filthy individuals were lounging in similar attitudes of despondency beside it. From the other lorry, a Soviet AMO, also of 1932 pattern, there emerged a third, equally travel-stained figure, who hurried in a businesslike manner over to the other two. After a brief explanatory exchange with one of them, his manner changed, acquiring a perceptible swagger, and he approached the second man with a humorous, almost crafty grin on his face.

"Well, Jo, where's your bottle of White Horse?" he asked in a Russian-accented American.

"Sure, the whisky's yours. You won," the other replied, returning the grin and rising slowly to his feet.

The first speaker unstrapped his watch and held it out. "This is for you. In memory."

"No, you won the bet. You keep the watch."

But having allowed the watch to be pressed on him, the loser proffered his hand for the clasp that the situation seemed to warrant. The former owner of the watch grinned again, hesitated between friendliness and distrust, then quite suddenly but without malice swung his hand deliberately out of reach and turned away. The loser stared blankly for a moment, seeking a reason for the affront and, finding none, looked round indignantly at the camera.

"Stop!" roared the director.

The affronted "American" in this scene was your correspondent, but even if he had not been a representative of the SCR he would have wanted to know why he had not been warned of the rebuff awaiting. It appears, however, that when you are a willing amateur invited to take part in a Russian film for the sake of your foreign accent and ways, this kind of thing is quite likely to happen to you. Your spontaneous reaction is what is needed. But did it have to be like this? I had not, I told the director, sweated on his desert location for nearly three months just to end the film on such a frustrating, unfriendly note that wasn't even implied in the script. Still, I ought to have remembered our director's love of improvisa-

tion. This, he assured me, was only an experiment. We would try the scene again now that I knew what to expect. "But I don't want a long, loving handshake of eternal friendship. It'll make everyone sick," he warned.

The more I went through the motions with my partner the more I began to enjoy the realism of the thing. We tried swinging our arms and both deliberately missing. We did it smiling and unsmiling. We even shook hands more or less normally. And in the end we arrived at a version where the two hands snatch together and ricochet apart and, just to show the distrust was not all on one side, I even put the watch to my ear to make sure it worked.

The film in question, *The Director*, was scripted by Yuri Nagibin. It is based on the life of Likhachov (Zvorykin in the film), the engineer who built up the motor works that now bears his name and, in so doing, laid the foundations of the Soviet motor industry. It is, however, far from a documentary account. Beginning as a rivalry over a girl between the hero and his former Baltic Fleet seaman, who has joined the CHEKA, the conflict culminates in a fierce struggle over ends and means. Ousted in love, Knysh, the CHEKA man, uses his position to get rid of his former friend on a charge of stealing "state-owned" scrap metal. Actually the metal was so badly needed for armoured cars in the civil war that Zvorykin was quite justified in taking it without permission. Like a good many fanatics, Knysh remains blind to his own personal motive, but it is this that lets him down just when he appears to have a good case for getting his rival shot. When the prisoner's wife comes to beg mercy for her husband, Knysh pleads love to her and is surprised on his knees by witnesses reliable enough to secure Zvorykin's release and his dismissal. Knysh then fades out of the picture while the works is slowly built up through all the difficulties and contradictions of the New Economic Policy period and eventually starts turning out lorries that could stand up to foreign competition.

The government then has to decide whether to go ahead with home investment or continue to rely largely on imported vehicles. This question is decided by a test run from Moscow to Samarkand across the Karakum Desert involving Soviet, American, Italian and other makes of vehicles, which actually did take place in 1932. In the film it is repeated with a dozen personal twists and adventures. Knysh turns up again with a mandate "from Comrade Stalin himself" to watch over the progress of the Soviet vehicles, only to find that most of them have dropped out and the Americans look like coming out on top. This time he pressures a young ex-convict in the Soviet team to tamper with the Fords' engines overnight. Director Zvorykin finds this out and after a terrific show-down makes a deliberate gesture of good faith by putting the young delinquent at the wheel of an American Ford with the promise of

freedom if he drives it to victory.

Though still a young man, Alexei Saltykov has already made several good films. *The Chairman*, also scripted by Nagibin, caused a sensation in the Khrushchov era with its vivid portrayal and penetrating analysis of the grim situation in Soviet farming in the late 'forties and early 'fifties. The happy ending did little to soften the stark realities. And yet it was also an inspiring picture of a man who will do anything and flout the authority of any bureaucrat in order to pull the farm he has been entrusted with out of its rut. This rôle earned the actor who played it, Ulyanov, a Lenin prize.

*The Chairman* was to have been followed by what Nagibin obviously conceived as its companion picture *The Director* and we actually began making this film five years ago. Our efforts at that time were, however, cut short by the death of our leading actor, Yevgeny Urbansky, who was crushed when his car somersaulted in front of the camera. I was also on that location and we all felt Urbansky's death as a deep personal loss. He was a born actor with an abundance of charm and vitality that seemed to spill over from acting into his everyday life, and had already starred in such memorable films as *Communist* and *Clear Skies*. Now it looked as if this picture which he had been so successfully making his own would never reach the screen. But a young actor, Nikolai Gubenko, with the courage and skill to undertake such a gruelling test came forward and, after a break of some three years, in which Saltykov made another good film *Realm of Women*, work on *The Director* was started afresh with an almost entirely new cast.

Very different in character and appearance from his predecessor, with several important social commitments such as being a deputy of the Moscow Soviet to keep him busy when not filming, Gubenko plays the part with much the same *élan*. He also has the background of an advanced school of theatre acting at Lyubimov's avant-garde Taganka Theatre, which stood him in good stead when faced with Saltykov's constant demands for improvisation. I particularly remember one episode that may or may not be included in the finished version.

Having revised most of the "show-down" scene after his own fashion, our director was obviously eager for more as we drove out to the location to complete the test-run sequences, and kept urging us all to think of ways of rounding off the episode in which the hero, tormented by heat, thirst and the strain of crisis after crisis, finally realises that he has won through. Nothing fails like success, particularly on the screen, and this was the ending that Saltykov particularly wanted to avoid. All of a sudden Gubenko started quoting a monologue from Sergei Yesenin's verse drama about the 18th century peasant leader Pugachov, in which he had played the title rôle at the Taganka, "Are you mad, are you mad? Who says

that all is lost?" They played with this idea for a while as we bumped over the dusty desert track, turned it upside down and inspected it from all angles, recalled that the Zvorykin of Part One had liked to look at himself in the glass and finally Saltykov decided that a glance into a pocket mirror in his moment of triumph could quite easily spark off this semi-delirious speech. An hour later it was being filmed.

What with the tragic failure of the first attempt, the heat of the Karakums in June and July, the mechanical troubles the drivers had to cope with, the dangers of such stunts as driving a blazing lorry off the edge of a cliff under these conditions, and the sheer muddle that in my experience seems to be a built-in element of all film-making, this picture has certainly been reminiscent of the epic it seeks to portray. Whether it will be so on the screen we have yet to see.

### Off location

The Uzbek republic had never known such a winter. Temperatures that had rarely fallen below zero went down to twenty or thirty below. Blizzards piled huge drifts over mud-walled villages. Sheep and cattle were marooned and died in thousands. When the thaw came the snows melted under an Asiatic sun, and so did the mud walls. The ancient city of Bukhara lived for a few days in imminent danger of being swept away. A nation accustomed to fight the ravages of heat had to face frostbite and exposure to intense cold.

That this freak winter did not cause a national disaster was probably due to the ability of Soviet organisations to mobilise resources and swing into action in such a crisis. But a lot of inevitable damage was done and not all the scars will heal quickly. It will be a long time before the meat situation is back to normal and in cities like Bukhara and Samarkand, where there used to be a brazier cooking *shashlyks* on nearly every street corner, one has often to be content with a kind of skewered hamburger. The cotton, on which the republic's economy largely depends, had to be planted late and cannot be expected to produce the usual annual increased yield.

With all this as a background one could only admire the local people's cheerfully independent way of living. The younger generations have grown up bi-lingual, Russian forming a useful additional means of communication as well as a doorway to Western culture. Despite the cinema and television, national customs are very much in evidence. In fact, after an evening in front of an Uzbek telly one is inclined to reverse the emphasis of that last statement, so largely devoted are the programmes to national dancing, singing and the screen productions of their own studios. And yet the TV link-up between Samarkand, Tashkent and Moscow creates an illusion of

nearness that is still quite new in this part of the world, and it is only when flying over the seemingly endless wastes beyond the Aral Sea that one realises just how vast and remote Central Asia is.

But industrialisation is breaking through everywhere. The immense gas resources of Bukhara were tapped several years ago and a gas pipeline has been pushed far across the desert. In the villages the handiest means of transport across the broad fields remains the donkey, but even in the remotest kishlaks, where camels shelter under saksaul-thatched lean-to roofs on the very fringe of the desert, we saw brand new motor-cycles kept indoors, just as one might in the suburbs of an industrial Western city, except that for some reason they were hitched up under the ceiling. Why this was done, I forgot to ask. Perhaps to protect the tyres from the attention of insects or snakes or the *varani*, the sand lizards, some of which are over three feet long and, I was told, creep into homesteads at night and suck the milk of the sleeping goats. These inquisitive creatures certainly took an interest in us. One day, when we were shooting a football scene, several of them lined up on a sand dune to watch. Since we were filming as usual in the heat of the day they had good reason to be surprised.

Till quite recently the housing that has gone with this spread of industrialisation has not been very imaginative and certainly the students' hostel where we lived in Bukhara was totally unadapted to the climate. Not surprisingly many Uzbek families prefer their own small houses with carpeted wooden sofas in a shady yard to a stuffy modern flat. But life is changing this, too, and in the honours list published on the eve of the October Revolution celebrations the architects who received a state award for town planning and design were those who designed the new Uzbek city of Navoi.

These brief notes, of course, outline only some of the immediate impressions gained from a summer of living and working in Uzbekistan. It was not a sight-seeing tour, although we did, of course, find time to visit the magnificent mausoleums and medresehs that no visitor to Samarkand or Bukhara can afford to miss. Samarkand is busy preparing for its 2,500th anniversary and its ancient buildings are receiving special attention. The historical part of Bukhara is less scattered than Samarkand's and its centre with the Miri-Arab medreseh and the huge Kalyan minaret rising amid the domed passages of the bazaar retains a unique historical atmosphere. Incidentally, both the Muslim college and bazaar still lead a lively existence. Samarkand, on the other hand, with its university, its new opera house, its numerous cinemas and theatres is culturally more advanced.

Both cities have at least a dozen nationalities among their populations—Uzbeks, Russians, Tajiks, Tatars, Kazakhs, the Bukhara Jews, even Chinese. In view of the rumours of racial disturbances

that have been circulated in the West it is probably worth putting on record that in nearly three months spent in these two cities I did not witness a single disturbance in the streets. In fact, the central park in Samarkand on a Saturday night amazed me by the orderliness with which so many people pursued a dozen different amusements, from lectures on current affairs to trips on the Big Wheel and open-air billiards. If one chats with the old men who sit cross-legged sipping tea on the wooden sofas of the *chaikhanas* it will not be long before one of them starts telling you about the size of his family. Households with eight or nine children are by no means uncommon and family ties are still strong, though women, of course, no longer wear the veil and are far more independent than they used to be. With universal medical care the population is growing rapidly and it is interesting to note that Uzbekistan, according to the last census (1959) had the highest proportion of people with a secondary education compared with any of the other Soviet republics, including the RSFSR. These educated young people—I met several from the teacher training college in Samarkand—do not seem very ambitious to go far afield; most of them want to take their technical or cultural skills back home. In the arts, however, there is a natural urge to taste the more sophisticated offerings of Moscow and Leningrad, and this does happen. I was most impressed by one young Tajik film director who, having graduated in history in his homeland, had also finished at the Gorky Cinema Institute in Moscow and was now busy making a film *The Art of the Orient* on a UNESCO grant. He had joined our group for the use of some of our equipment and we had several fascinating discussions on the history of the Middle East.

It is terribly difficult to judge living standards at a glance, particularly in rural areas. Certainly the traditional poverty and disease of the East has disappeared. The Muscovites I was with often assured me that the bearded elders we saw riding their donkeys to market probably had “far more money parked away than you or me”—presumably returns on fruit and other produce grown on their own private plots and their share of the collective cotton crop which the whole family would certainly have been engaged in harvesting. Prosperity also varies from one district to another. The whole Zerashvan valley is considered rich because of the fertility of the soil. The tobacco growers of Urgut, in the mountains some thirty miles south of Samarkand, are regarded as exceptionally rich people apparently because of their canny highland mentality. “Even if you met an Urgut in America”, I was told by the driver who gave me a lift out of this little community, “I’ll bet you he’d be the richest man in town”. And, indeed, when I put up my camera to photograph a farmer riding towards me, he grinned and called out in Russian, “Only for money!” Even here, however,



very few people are within sight of owning their own car, for instance, although the time may not be far off (it has already arrived in such cities as Moscow and Leningrad) when a much greater supply of consumer durables will be needed to soak up the surplus cash that is becoming available in this fast developing republic.

## Economic Developments of the Eastern Regions of the U.S.S.R.

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Before the October Revolution, the Asian part of Russia was distinguished by an extremely low standard of economic, social and cultural development, especially in the outlying districts (e.g. the northern areas). There was only one university, Tomsk University, in the whole of Asian Russia.

In March 1918, less than six months after the October Revolution, Lenin said : “We have material both in natural resources and man-power, as well as in the wonderful creative scope that the Great Revolution has given to the people to make a really mighty and rich Russia.”

In April 1918, Lenin, addressing the Academy of Sciences, presented the scientists with the task of creating a general plan for

the development of the national economy, thereby starting an epoch of scientifically based economic planning. The most important factor was defined by Lenin as the "rational distribution of industry in Russia from the viewpoint of the proximity of raw material and the least possible labour losses in the transition from the processing of raw material, through all the successive stages up to the finished product".

The proximity of industry to the sources of raw material, outlined by Lenin, meant every possible development of industry, and of the economy as a whole, in Asian Russia, since it was richest in natural resources. This achieved not only an economic but also a social-political effect. In the extremely backward "national" outskirts of Russia, in its former colonies, modern large-scale industry developed, a working class was formed, a national intelligentsia was created, towns of a modern type sprang up, as well as cultural centres with universities and scientific-research institutes, and right up to the national academies of sciences in the five Union republics and to the widely known Siberian Section of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

According to the combination of natural and labour resources, the level of development of the economy and rates of its growth, and specialization of the economy, the Asian part of the U.S.S.R. can be divided into three major regions: (1) Siberia and the Far East; (2) Kazakhstan; and (3) Central Asia.

*Siberia and the Far East* is a very large timber-industrial region of world importance. Its timber resources totalling 60 milliard cubic metres, comprise 80 per cent of the forest reserves of the U.S.S.R. and about half the resources of coniferous timber in the rest of the world. This region contains 70 per cent of the hydroelectric-power resources of the U.S.S.R., 75 per cent of its coal reserves, half of the estimated reserves of oil and gas, huge resources of copper, nickel, tin, polymetallic ores, gold, diamonds, etc. Nowadays, when there is an acute shortage of pure fresh water in many parts of the world, it is particularly important to note the huge water resources of Siberia and the Far East: the annual runoff of the Ob is 400 cubic kilometres, the Yenisei 620 cu. km., the Lena 500 cu. km., and the Amur about 350 cu. km. The volume of the deepest lake of Baikal is 23,000 cu. km. of crystal-pure, extraordinarily limpid water.

The population of Siberia and the Far East has more than doubled during the 50 years since the October Revolution (from 9.5 to 25 million). Its proportion of the population of the U.S.S.R. has grown from 6 per cent to 11 per cent; yet in spite of the high natural increase, Siberia and the Far East need immigration from the western regions of the Soviet Union. This is particularly true for the Far East.

*Kazakhstan*, by virtue of its numerous natural resources, is a continuation of Siberia. Copper, coal, oil, polymetallic ores, and other metals are the largest resources of this region, on an All-Union, and even world scale. On the other hand, unlike Siberia, Kazakhstan is a woodless region with vast areas of steppe and desert. The steppe is now under intensive cultivation. The southern dry steppe and desert zones constitute one of the world's largest areas of pasture for livestock (over 140 million hectares); but Kazakhstan has meagre water resources, insufficient for irrigation and other purposes. Nevertheless, the population has more than doubled during the 50 years since the October Revolution, from 5.5 to 13 million. Of the three eastern regions of the U.S.S.R., Kazakhstan has the highest rate of growth of industry—114-fold during 50 years, and has become one of the major agricultural regions of the Soviet Union. Its sowing area of 6 million hectares in 1940 increased to 23 million hectares in 1967. With such growth rates in industry and agriculture, there is a great need for a sharp increase in labour resources through immigration.

*Central Asia* is a region that combines natural resources typical of the Asian part of the U.S.S.R. and the dense population typical of the European part of the U.S.S.R. It is rich in polymetallic ores, gold, copper, salts, sulphur, natural gas, oil, and hydro-power resources of the mountain rivers. Nearly half of the irrigated land of the Soviet Union is in Central Asia (about 5 million hectares out of a total 10.1 million), as well as 60 million hectares of pasture (over 20 per cent of the pasture area of the U.S.S.R.). The population has more than doubled in the 50 years since the October Revolution (from 7.3 million to 19 million). It is now only a little less than that of Siberia and the Far East. With the highest natural increase in the U.S.S.R. (27 persons per 1,000 inhabitants as compared with an average of 10 per 1,000 for the U.S.S.R.), Central Asia will soon catch up with Siberia and the Far East, and there is already sufficient population for the most labour-consuming industries to be developed.

To develop the economy, science and culture in the eastern regions of the Soviet Union, vast capital investments have been needed. It should be noted that construction in the Asiatic part of the U.S.S.R. is considerably more expensive, as a rule, than that in the European part, due to natural conditions,—severe frosts in winter in Siberia, the Far East and Kazakhstan; quicksands in the deserts of Central Asia; permafrost in the north of Siberia and in a large part of the Far East; the vastness of the area of the seismic zones in Central Asia and partly in Kazakhstan, Siberia and the Far East, and also on account of the big additional expense of population migration into Siberia, the Far East and Kazakhstan. According to 1965–66 data, the cost of industrial construction in

the extreme north of the Asian part of the U.S.S.R. is five times higher than in the central regions of the European part of the Soviet Union.

A total of 650 milliard roubles was invested in the national economy of the U.S.S.R. during the 50 years 1918–67. Of this, 500 milliard roubles were State centralized investments. Out of the 650 milliard roubles of all capital investments, 40 per cent was used for industry (including the building industry), 20 per cent for housing construction, 15 per cent for agriculture, 10 per cent for commerce, 10 per cent for transport and communication, and 5 per cent for science, education and culture.

In 1967 the sum total of all capital investments reached 57 milliard roubles. Of this, 8.6 milliard roubles was in Siberia and the Far East (15 per cent), 3.9 milliard in Kazakhstan (7 per cent), and as much in Central Asia (7 per cent). Thus about 30 per cent of the total capital investments of the U.S.S.R. went to the eastern regions. The proportion of capital investment in the east as compared with that for the whole country (30 per cent) is higher than the proportion of the population (24 per cent). If one more point is taken into consideration—that new construction in the Asian part of the Soviet Union is more purposeful, especially in power and mining industries, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, timber, chemical and fishing industries—then the rapid growth of these industries in the east of the Soviet Union becomes clear.

*The position of the eastern regions in the national economy of the U.S.S.R.* is becoming increasingly essential. This is seen from the data in Table 1. The proportion of production in the eastern regions in relation to the U.S.S.R. as a whole is higher than the proportion of population (24 per cent). This is true for the production of electric power, extraction of coal and natural gas, supply of wood and production of sawn-timber, and cotton yield. The eastern regions practically “monopolise” the output of tin, gold and diamonds. The proportion of grain from the Asian part of the U.S.S.R. varies greatly, according to variation in climate from year to year. As a rule, the share of the eastern regions in the national economic industries of the U.S.S.R., listed in Table 1, shows a continuous increase. But this does not apply to steel smelting and the production of machines. The iron and steel industry in the eastern regions is of limited importance. Mining the rich iron ores in the European part of the Soviet Union—in the Kursk Magnetic Anomaly, etc.—strengthens the metallurgical centres of the western regions, including the Urals. The metallurgical centres of the eastern regions are much too small in terms of the scientific-technical revolution and so far do not justify further expansion. Mechanical engineering, relatively labour-consuming and metal-consuming, so far has no great prospects in the eastern regions either, but is very profitable

in the western regions of the U.S.S.R. In the east of the Soviet Union, the engineering industries that develop are mainly those which have a ready sale for their products in the regions themselves, and form an effective part of their territorial-production complexes.

TABLE 1  
Share of the eastern regions in the national economy  
(as percentage of the total for the U.S.S.R.)

BRANCHES OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY	1940	1960	1965	1968
Capacity of electric power-stations ...	11.7	22.9	28.6	29.4
Coal output ...	28.7	35.9	39.3	41.5
Iron-ore output ...	1.7	11.1	14.5	16.7
Oil output ...	6.3	7.2	7.1	12.1
Natural gas output ...	0.5	2.4	14.5	26.0
Iron casting ...	10.3	7.7	9.7	10.5
Steel smelting ...	10.6	9.3	9.0	8.1
Timber provision ...	23.4	26.2	30.3	33.1
Sawn-timber production ...	24.5	25.9	29.6	29.8
Cellulose production ...	—	9.3	10.2	18.8
Cement production ...	13.5	21.4	23.0	24.2
Sulphuric acid production ...	4.2	18.7	19.4	22.4
Mineral fertilizer production ...	6.9	15.9	16.2	16.4
Metal-cutting lathe production ...	1.6	7.1	5.2	5.1
Tractor production ...	—	12.2	12.0	12.6
Cotton fabric production ...	3.8	8.1	9.4	9.3
Silk fabric production ...	8.2	9.6	12.7	13.0
Gross yield of grain crops ...	13.4	32.1	17.3	*22.6
Gross yield of cotton ...	87.3	90.5	94.0	94.3
Meat production ...	23.0	21.8	22.6	21.3
Butter production ...	29.4	19.5	18.3	18.5

\*1967

*Electrification* is the "key factor" for the economic development of the eastern regions of the U.S.S.R. It is just in these regions that the Soviet Union's and the world's largest electric-power stations have been created, and are being built. They are hydroelectric-power stations and also thermal power stations near the opencast workings of the country's cheapest coal. In 1968, the capacity of power stations in the eastern regions was 42 million kw. They generated 160 milliard kwh. of electricity, that is 3.000 kwh. per capita, as compared with the Soviet Union's average of 2.700 kwh., and 2.660 kwh. in the western regions of the U.S.S.R.; but in the last few years, the high preponderance of the eastern regions over the western regions in the production of electric power per head has noticeably equalized. This is due to the great amount of natural gas that is being supplied by Central Asia through pipe-lines to the

central regions of the European part of the U.S.S.R. and the Urals, and is used as fuel in their capacious thermal electric-power stations.

The southern part of East Siberia serves as an electric-power "heart" for the whole country, where the world's largest hydro-electric power stations have been erected—the Bratsk Station on the Angara (and the Ilimsk Station is under construction), and the Krasnoyarsk Station on the Yenisei (with the Sayano-Shushinsky Station being built near the village of Shushinskoye where Lenin was exiled by the Tsarist government). Also in Southern Siberia is the Kansk-Achinsk coal basin, with enormous reserves, stretching for over 700 kilometres along the Trans-Siberian railway in a zone that is from 50 to 300 km. wide. Its reserves (to a depth of 300 metres) are 250 milliard tons, and the total reserves are 1,200 milliard tons. The output of coal in the Kansk-Achinsk basin can be brought up to 200 or 250 million tons a year within 10 to 15 years, with the prime cost of 50 to 60 kopecks a ton. Large thermal electric-power stations are already working on this coal, and in future their number and total capacity will greatly increase—up to 40 to 50 million kwh. It is planned to transmit part of the electricity to the Urals.

A similar situation is emerging in the east of Kazakhstan where coal is mined in the Ekibastu basin and large thermal electric power stations have been and are being built. By 1970 they will be supplying electricity to the European part of the U.S.S.R.

In Central Asia, with vast hydroelectric-power resources in the mountain rivers (primarily the Pyanje and Vakhsh rivers), the construction of large hydro-power stations has begun. The unique Nurek hydro-power station on the Vakhsh river should be noted, with a dam 300 metres high and a capacity of 2.7 million kw. Large reserves of natural gas make it possible to create in Central Asia capacious thermal power stations, too.

*Town building* is one of the most characteristic features of the eastern region of the U.S.S.R. A majority of the towns built in the east of the Soviet Union are new towns. The total number of towns in the eastern regions of the U.S.S.R. is 315 (1966), including 265 small ones (up to 20 thousand inhabitants) and medium-sized (up to 100 thousand), and 50 large cities (over 100 thousand inhabitants). The urban population of the east of the U.S.S.R. increased by nearly 25 million from 1926 (according to the First All-Union census), to 1967, to a total of 30 million. Thus 25 million persons were added to the original 5 million town dwellers in 1926, in the east of the country, a five-fold increase in urban population. Many old towns, such as Tashkent, Novosibirsk, Alma-Ata, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk, Vladivostok and others, have been renovated completely. Many large cities have grown on barren sites or in place of villages, e.g.

Dushanbe, Karaganda, Komsomolsk-on-Amur, Angarsk, Norilsk, and others.

*Transport construction* is one of the most urgent tasks in the eastern regions of the U.S.S.R. There is a total of 133 thousand kilometres of railway lines in the Soviet Union (1966), including 37 thousand kilometres in the east, that is, about 30 per cent in an area comprising 80 per cent of the entire territory of the U.S.S.R. On the other hand the eastern regions have a larger proportion of navigable waterways (60 per cent), mainly in Siberia and the Far East, since river transport in Kazakhstan and Central Asia plays a very small part. But the proportion of motor roads in the east of the U.S.S.R. is still quite small so far, only 24 per cent.

A large part of the railways in the eastern regions, with the exception of the Trans-Siberian railway and the Central Asian main line, were built after the October Revolution. Particularly large-scale transport construction has been developed in Kazakhstan. Of the largest new main lines, the Turkestan-Siberian, the South-Siberian and the Central-Siberian railways should be mentioned. Built before the Revolution, the Trans-Siberian railway has been largely reconstructed and electrified, from Moscow to Lake Baikal. As a result of this, the carrying capacity of the line has increased by 70 per cent, and the train weight has increased to 5,000 tons.

Nevertheless, the need for communications is still very great. One of the large-scale works that has been planned is the Baikal-Amur main line from Taishet to the northern extremity of Baikal, and farther on to Komsomolsk-on-Amur. The section of the railway between Taishet and the Upper Lena (Ust-Kut) has already been built.

Air transport plays a big part in the east of the U.S.S.R. with its enormous distances and lack of roads in many areas. In recent years it has become a daily routine everywhere, up to the distant northern settlements where many of the inhabitants have never yet seen a train or a motor car.

After the October Revolution, the Arctic Sea Route began functioning. Ports such as Dikson, Dudinka, Igarka, Tiksi, and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski have been created in the Asian part of the Soviet Union on the seas of the Arctic Ocean and on the Pacific. The big international port of Nakhodka has been built near Vladivostok.

*Education, science and culture* are a function of economic development. The great upsurge of the economy in the eastern areas of the U.S.S.R. has brought about a still greater development of education, science and culture. The rapid growth of the number of industrial and office workers caused a demand for engineers, scientists and other specialists with higher education. For example, the number of workers and employees in Kazakhstan grew from 900

thousand in 1940 to 4.5 million in 1968; in the republics of Central Asia—from 1.3 to 4.1 million during the same period. The number of specialists with higher and secondary technical training increased in that period from 50 to 400 thousand in Kazakhstan, i.e. eight-fold, and from 90 to 430 thousand in Central Asiatic republics, nearly five-fold. After the October Revolution, these specialists began to be trained mainly in higher educational institutions (universities, etc.) set up in the east itself. For example, there are now 43 higher educational institutions in Kazakhstan and 59 in the republics of Central Asia. There are nearly 200,000 students in Kazakhstan and about 350,000 students in the Central Asiatic republics.

One great advance in the last quarter century has been the establishment of major scientific centres in the eastern regions, namely, the Siberian Section of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. (in Novosibirsk) with the East-Siberian and the Far-Eastern Branches in Irkutsk and Vladivostok, and the five Academies of Sciences in the Union Republics of Kazakhstan (in 1945), Uzbekistan (1943), Kirghizia (1954), Tajikistan (1951) and Turkmenia (1951) with numerous research institutes and thousands of scientists.

The development of cultural life is very difficult to evaluate statistically. Yet some data, as for example 23 permanent professional theatres in Kazakhstan is an indication of an intensive cultural life in the national republics in the east of the Soviet Union. There are 24 such theatres in Uzbekistan, 9 in Tajikistan, 1 in Kirghizia and 6 in Turkmenia. An average of 600 titles of books is published annually in the Kazakh language, 900 in Uzbek, 70 to 80 in the Yakut language.

*Equalization of the levels of economic development* in different republics and regions and, among these, the levels of the western and eastern regions is one of the basic economic and social tasks in the U.S.S.R. Such equalization should not be understood on any account as a unification of the regions. On the contrary, originality of development, peculiarities of the local, natural, national and other conditions are taken into consideration to an ever greater degree when determining the ways of development of any region. Equalization is understood as the achievement of an equal degree of material incentive for the population in all the regions of the U.S.S.R., of a similar and sufficiently high standard of prosperity. The conditions for this in the east are rather diverse: it is enough to compare the life in the irrigated areas of the Fergana Valley, just one continuous orchard, and the life in the extreme north of Siberia. That is why favourable terms and big wage increases are introduced for the population of the north of Siberia and the Far East. Naturally, there are various differences, but the living standard as a whole in the eastern areas is either similar to that in the



western regions or exceeds it—either in a natural way (oases of Central Asia) or through the introduction of additional privileges (the north of Siberia and the Far East).

*Problems and prognoses.* It can be quite definitely said that Lenin's proposals concerning the development of the eastern regions of the U.S.S.R. have been successfully carried out. In all the eastern regions there have been created large industrial, transport, scientific and cultural centres—big cities, as key points for the future, and greater economic development and population increase in the sparsely peopled virgin areas. Siberia and the Far East will require considerable immigration from the western regions of the Soviet Union, for which purpose it is necessary to raise the material incentives still higher and to expand housing construction. The need for an inflow of population from the west can be lessened by even greater electrification, greater use of electric power to do work, and by a sharp reduction in the establishment of labour-consuming industries (in Central Asia, on the contrary, by having more of this kind of industry). But the most important thing is the development of transport—to bring the major centres within the reach of the inhabitants of the most distant localities.

We can say, therefore, that a real basis for further development of the eastern regions of the U.S.S.R. has been established. Now a great speeding-up of this development is about to start, far greater than that in the west of the Soviet Union.

## A Personal Visa

*Kathleen W. Williams*

The most interesting aspect of Svetlana Sergeevna Turinge's visit was that she came to stay with me for three weeks on a personal visa; as far as I know, such visas have only been granted to relatives. Mrs. Turinge was my guide in Novosibirsk and teaches English in Akademgorodok. Refreshingly, she did not try to present any special image of the Soviet Union; she answered questions when asked.

Naturally I took Mrs. Turinge round educational establishments and, meeting children, students and lecturers, she emerged as a whole personality, and a very feminine one at that; this surprised many people, the impression having got around that all Russian

women are masculine types. Most of the questions asked were about Akademgorodok or about Siberian weather; they were answered in impeccable, if somewhat literary, English. People were pleased to learn that engineers in her Institute of Inland Waterways were learning English. When visiting my University classes, she was surprised at the freedom I have to choose material: in her English classes she has to get through several registers of vocabulary in each lesson. I also confirmed from her what I had observed in the Seminar for Teachers of Russian in Moscow University—that students in the language laboratories are not able to play back the text with their own repetitions in order to compare the two and criticise themselves.

It seems that, though summer is short around Novosibirsk, it is hot enough for people to get sunburnt. In winter houses are kept very comfortable by central heating and hot water taps may be run at will—the low rent covers all services, unmetered. Outside, only very severe snow-storms disrupt work, theatre-going and other pleasures.

The selection of child geniuses at 12 or 13 for the Akademgorodok special physics and maths school is conducted in competitive rounds throughout the Soviet Union; then the finalists arrive for a summer course in Akademgorodok; one of the qualities sought is the ability to think in *unorthodox* ways. Neither here, nor in the University, are there many laboratories, since children and students study in research institutes under the people doing the research.

Such details, though not always new, were made memorable by a modest yet charming manner. The visit was a success, helped by the kind hospitality of Mrs. Rachel Kessel, London, Professor and Mrs. Spink in London, Professor and Mrs. Waddington in Edinburgh, my relations in Ruislip, and a sheep-farm in Wales—quite an itinerary for 3 weeks.

## Renewing Acquaintance with Soviet Defectology

*Beatrice King*

For one reason or another it was thirty years since my last visit to the Soviet Union. In my pre-war visits I had never missed the Herzen Institute in Leningrad with its Faculty of Defectology where so much interesting work was being carried on.

On this, my recent visit, though much shorter than pre-war ones, I specially asked the U.S.S.R.-G.B. Societies in Moscow and Lenin-grad to arrange discussions for me in both cities, for now as Librarian and Information Officer at the S.C.R. I often receive requests for information on Soviet treatment of the problem of handicapped children, the mental and physical.

As in every sphere of Soviet life I found the last war had cut a large slice out of the progress that one had come to expect. This has been compensated by a higher level of activity, which has followed on greater state appreciation of the importance of research and experiment into the whole field of defectology. It was not only that in Moscow there is now an independent Institute of Defectology of Union standing and that the Department of Defectology in the Herzen Institute is now an Institute on its own, housed in a separate building. It was the quality of the work and the approach to the problem that was so impressive.

In Moscow the quiet, restrained talk of the director particularly, did not hide the fact of how alive the Institute was; how well aware they all were of the problems facing them in their task of fundamental research into the why and how of mental and physical defects, and the complementary task of helping the teachers of these children, through the deep research they are carrying on, to achieve ever greater success in leading the handicapped to overcome their defects. Throughout the description of the work of the Institute by both the director and by Professor Pevsner, there was an undercurrent of excitement as though they were engaged on some great adventure, as indeed they were—the correction of nature and nurture.

To understand their quiet enthusiasm, their stubbornness in research one must bear in mind the profound belief of Soviet educationists and philosophers in the educability of the human species. This Marxist belief that has already proved its validity in Soviet conditions drives educationists and other scientists to research and to experiment into ways of correcting, or at least overcoming the mistakes of nature.

There have been changes in approach. In the early years failure on the part of a pupil to reach the required standard of attainment for a class or to respond to the accepted class environment was put down to inefficient teaching, or to the wrong approach to the child, and the teacher was subjected to much exhortation to improve his or her qualifications. Today, while attention is paid as much as ever to the quality of teaching, it is recognised that the reason for backwardness may be physical, psychological and emotional, all in the last resort due to biological factors as well as environmental.

Genetics now receives much attention particularly as regards mental defectives, and there is much study of chromosomes, and

much co-operation between pedagogy, psychology, neuropathology, biology, genetics, and medicine, in fact between pedagogy and any science that might throw light on the cause of the defects and that can help in overcoming them.

The U.S.S.R. Institute of Defectology is concerned in brief, with the problems of teaching and upbringing of defectives of all types, deaf and partially deaf, blind and partially sighted, with logopedics (speech difficulties) and with olegophrenics (mentally retarded). Olegophrenia has two divisions: the mentally retarded and the imbeciles. Each aspect has its research laboratory. In the same way the physical handicaps have separate laboratories: one for total deafness, one for blindness, one laboratory for deaf and dumb, and one for the most difficult cases of all, blind and deaf-mutes.

A laboratory for temporary retardation is to have a school attached to it for experiment and observation.

A psychology laboratory deals with every aspect of the subject. Speech is considered very important as a means of development and there is a special laboratory for experimental phonetics and hearing. There are clinical and medical laboratories and a physiological laboratory for general anomalies.

For some years now retardation in the pre-school child—under 7 years—has been receiving attention and the Institute has a pre-school sector with its special laboratory. To compensate for defects, particularly physical defects, ever newer and better equipment and instruments are required. To satisfy this need there is a technical laboratory where electronics engineering as well as other technical means are used in the making of aids. This list does not exhaust the number of laboratories.

Professor Pevsner has a very clear-cut definition of oligophrenia, arrived at after much discussion and consideration. She limits the term to biological retardation, or mishap. She excludes all the learning difficulties that arise from social causes, all temporary difficulties such as illnesses and physical weaknesses. She also excludes what she calls secondary features, such as dumbness, which lead to a diminution of cognition, but which defects can be overcome as has been proved by the blind and deaf who have graduated from universities.

There is finally the imbecile and the bed case. These require social help, though even imbeciles have responded to training and some can work.

There are three laboratories occupied with the temporary retarded. Some problems they are faced with, such as blindness with mental retardation, or other combinations of brain and physical defects, present many difficulties and require the co-operation of several departments.

There is today much research into heredity. What happens when either or both parents are backward? What is the effect of defective grandparents? There is research into twins of retarded parents and into identical twins.

Another aspect of research is the pathology of adult and child behaviour.

How do they discover the retarded child? First in the maternity hospital—nearly all births take place there; after eight days the child is thoroughly examined. At the age of one month the child undergoes all the tests for normality. The doctor visits the home. By law all mothers must attend the health clinics in their borough regularly. If the mother fails to do so a nurse will call to find out why. At 4 years the child again undergoes all tests: physical, neurological, etc. Again at 7 years there is a similar complete medical examination. In any case of doubt, the neuro-pathologist, the psychiatrist and any one else whose advice may help is called in.

Apart from this a teacher at school may find a boy or girl either very difficult in behaviour or backward in learning, and decides that the child is at fault. The matter is then brought by the teacher to the school pedagogical committee. This committee may ask for a special examination by the school doctor and by a psychologist. There have been cases where the last two did not agree with the teacher, and the pupils were sent to another school where they fitted in and showed no retardation.

But when the doctor and psychologist agree with the school the child will be taken by its mother to the Institute where a commission including doctor, neuro-pathologist, psychologist, defectologists, head teacher and anyone in any way concerned with the child and its family likely to aid in arriving at a correct decision, will spend not less than an hour examining and testing the child and enquiring into its background before coming to a final decision.

In other parts of the country there are regional medico-pedagogical committees for this purpose.

My hosts were emphatic that today the retarded child for whatever cause will get the special care it needs. There are now kindergarten for defective children, since the earlier the treatment can start the greater likelihood of success in the training.

The number of mentally defectives given me is 0.6% - 0.7% which compared with figures in other countries is very low. This may be due to the very strict scientific definition of mental defective by the Russians.

In Leningrad the Faculty of Defectology, now housed in a separate Institute, has allowed the Herzen Institute of Pedagogy to be concerned with teacher training for the normal secondary school. Iraidia Ushakova, the Dean of the Faculty of Defectology, told me

the Institute, which trains teachers as well as doing research, works along four lines.

In the department for the blind and partially sighted the training includes practical work, sport, correctional physical education, and methods to develop compensatory faculties. The syllabus for the school subjects is the same as in the ordinary school.

There is a department for the deaf and partially deaf, one for logopedics (speech defects) and one for mental retardation (debiles). The deaf do not complete the full secondary school course. They do less mathematics and more practical work, and they leave school qualified for work of various kinds. The logopedics get a full secondary education. The debiles have special schools where in eight years they reach the standard of class 4, able to deal with simple arithmetic, communicate and to read books.

Imbeciles and idiots go to homes run by social welfare bodies where they live and are cared for. For both, work has great therapeutic value. By the time they leave school they are ready to take jobs in woodwork, metal work and as turners and bookbinders. Some work on conveyor belts. Many earn good money and marry. Boys and girls are taught personal hygiene and those domestic habits and tasks that produce a pleasant home. Both boarding and day schools are available.

Following a decision to experiment there is now differential teaching for debiles and for children retarded through illness or other environmental causes. These latter are not taught either in the ordinary school nor in a school for defectives. There is a temporary arrangement by which they are to be taught in class 1, followed by class 2, in specially small classes, with much varied equipment. By the end of the second year they are expected to go back to the ordinary school.

Here, as in Moscow, a child in the kindergarten or in any class in school, whom the teacher suspects as being subnormal, can be recommended for examination by a group of specialists of which the chairman will be head of a special school. Other members of the group will include a defectologist, psychologist, psychiatrist, neuropathologist, and logoped, as well as the child's own teacher. (Before this, as in Moscow, the child will have been seen by the school's pedagogical committee and examined by a doctor.) Everything concerning the child, its behaviour in and out of school, its exercise books, its leisure activity, is considered by the group of specialists. As can be imagined, this is a serious and lengthy procedure.

A diagnostic class has recently been introduced by the Institute although there are only a few such classes at present. And in all of this work there continues to be close co-operation between Moscow and Leningrad.

To my question whether it is difficult to get students for work with the handicapped, the answer was that, for every one place in the Institute last year (1968), there were nine candidates, almost all women. In 1969 out of 200 entrants 21 were men. There were 800 full-time students and 700 in correspondence courses.

Some teachers in schools for the handicapped, after eight or more years, return to take post-graduate courses, while there are short refresher courses for others. The training, as is to be expected, includes medical study and biology, as well as special psychology and methods. Research and experiment goes on here too.

Not without interest: the grants to students are higher than in an ordinary teaching institute and the salary for teachers in schools for the handicapped is 25% higher than the ordinary rate.

# Calendar

## JANUARY

23	8 p.m.	Film	Manchester
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26-3 (Feb.)		Lenin Book Exhibition	Edinburgh
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## FEBRUARY

5	and others to be announced	Concert	Manchester
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6	7 p.m.	Film (SCR)	London
16-26		Lenin Book Exhibition	Birmingham

20	7 p.m.	Film	Manchester
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24		Concert	London
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## MARCH

6	7 p.m.	Film (SCR)	London
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6	8 p.m.	Film	Manchester
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9-19		Lenin Book Exhibition	Leeds
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12	continuing indefinitely	Lenin Film Season	London
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13	7 p.m.	Film	Manchester
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20 (Mar.)-26 (May)		Exhibitions on Lenin	London
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23	7 p.m.	Lenin Commemorative Lecture	London
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Maurice Dobb  
and Reception



*The following summary of forthcoming events is not intended to be comprehensive. It includes, however, other events than those organised by the Society. Times and dates are given whenever possible as known at the time of going to press.*

‘Once Again About Love’	University Roscoe Building (Advance booking only—Forsyth’s; Progress Bookshop, Manchester; British Soviet Friendship Society) University Library
Arvid Yansons conducts Hallé	Free Trade Hall
To be announced	Bowater House Cinema University Library
‘Khovanshchina’	University Roscoe Building (as above)
Igor Oistrakh Klemperer	Royal Festival Hall
To be announced	Bowater House Cinema
‘I Love You’	University Roscoe Building (as above) University Brotherton Library
‘Heart of a Mothers’	Paris Pullman Cinema
‘Short Story’	
Lenin in October’	
‘Stories About Lenin’	
‘The 6th of July’	
and a selection of silent classics including ‘October,’ ‘Mother,’	
‘End of St. Petersburg’	
‘In the Town of ‘S’	Manchester Film Institute Society British Museum Botany Theatre, University College

## APRIL

1	5.30 p.m.	Official Opening, Lenin Book Exhibition (by invitation only)	London
2-11	10.30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mon. to 5.30 p.m. only. Closed Sunday.	Lenin Book Exhibition	London
1- 5		Meeting and Holiday (see SCR News)	Geneva
3-11		SCR Russian Language Course	London
3 (Apr.)-10 (May)	Friday, Saturday, Sunday, 7.45 p.m.	Play	London
6	6.15 p.m. 8.30 p.m.	Film Lecture and Films	London „
7	6.15 p.m. 8.30 p.m.	Film Film	„ „
8	6.15 p.m. 8.30 p.m.	Film Film	„ „
9	6.15 p.m. 8.30 p.m.	Film Film	„ „
17	7 p.m.	Film (SCR)	London
24-25		Lenin Festival (British Soviet Friendship Society).	London

## MAY

1	8 p.m.	Film	Manchester
8	7 p.m.	Film (SCR)	London
23	3 p.m.	Annual General Meeting (SCR)	London

## JUNE

5	7 p.m.	Film (SCR)	London
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## JULY

(Dates to be arranged)	Kirov Ballet	London and Provinces
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National Book League, 7 Albermarle  
Street, London, W.1.  
National Book League (as above)

‘ The Bolsheviki ’      University of London Goldsmiths’  
College  
Unity Theatre, 1 Goldington Street,  
N.W.1.

Newsreels about Lenin	National Film Theatre
Lenin in Film	
Ivor Montagu	” ” ”
‘ Vyborg Side ’ (Kozintsev)	” ” ”
‘ Three Songs of Lenin ’	
(Vertov)	” ” ”
‘ Man with a Gun ’ (Yutkevitch)	” ” ”
‘ Stories About Lenin ’	
(Yutkevitch)	” ” ”
‘ Lenin in October ’ (Romm)	” ” ”
‘ Lenin in 1918 ’ (Romm)	” ” ”

To be announced      Bowater House Cinema  
Scottish Co-operative Hall, E.C.4, and  
The Temple, E.C.4.

‘ Lenin in Poland ’      University Roscoe Building (as above)  
To be announced      Bowater House Cinema  
Cavendish Hotel,  
78 Lancaster Gate, W.2.

To be announced      Bowater House Cinema

# SCR News

## RECENT EVENTS

### **Lambeth Borough Council**

The Society was pleased to welcome the Mayor of Lambeth, the Chairmen of the Libraries & Amenities Committee, of the Twinning Committee, the Deputy Chairman of the Development Committee, the Borough Librarian and the Divisional Education Officer, at our offices last October. Particular interest was shown in the Library and Visual Aids Department. The occasion was informal and cordial and we trust that the friendly relations established with the Borough will develop to our mutual benefit.

The Borough Architects' Department is preparing a scheme for the external decoration of the building and landscaping of the frontage; work is expected to be carried out in the spring.

### **Anatoli Masko, General Secretary of the USSR-GB Society** (October 30th - November 11th)

The Society was responsible for arranging a programme for part of Mr. Masko's first visit to this country as general secretary of the USSR-GB Society. His day at Furzedown College of Education proved a particularly valuable experience, especially in providing some idea of the teaching aids used by trainee teachers. Illustrative material on the Soviet Union for use in junior schools, for example, is practicably impossible to obtain in this country at present.

A meeting with the Society's officers on November 7th concentrated on some of the more difficult problems—the need for expansion of language courses in both countries, and for an increase in the number of specialist visitors (both ways), etc.

Mr. Masko was also guest of the Mayor and Mayoress of Lambeth.

We were also pleased to be hosts to Mr. Vyacheslav Yudin, who works at the Orjonikidze Plant in Moscow, and who accompanied Mr. Masko on some of his visits.

### **Presentation to Mr. Lipmann Kessel**

On Friday, October 31st, on his retirement as Chairman of the Society, Mr. Kessel was presented with an engraved medallion by Ivor Montagu, Vice-President, in recognition of his outstanding services to the Society. Mr. Masko also presented him with a gift and an Address, signed by Madame Popova, President of the Union of Friendship Societies of the USSR and by Alexei Surkov, President of the USSR-GB Society. We were delighted by the presence of Mr. D. N. Pitt, Q.C., who presided.

## **Dinner for 750 tourists from the m.s. Shota Rustaveli, November 11th**

All too short was the verdict, since the Soviet tourists had to leave before ten o'clock in order to return to their ship at Tilbury.

The Deputy Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor John Guest, gave a warm welcome to the tourists, referring to his former close association with Soviet people when he served in the Royal Navy on the Murmansk convoys during the war. Our Vice-Chairman, Mr. Pockney, was in the chair. Guests included the Mayor of Camden, the Deputy Mayor of Lambeth, Herbert Matthews, formerly of the *New York Times* and biographer of Fidel Castro, representatives of the Port of London Authority, the Royal Mail Lines, and of Frames Tours; Mr. Shishkin, the Soviet Consul General, Mr. Chikvaidze of the Soviet Embassy, Mr. Zavorin and colleagues from Intourist (London).

Everyone enjoyed the exuberance and artistry of the Dagenham Girl Pipers, the spontaneous songs of a Russian soprano and the adaptability of Harry Gold's Band to meet the rushed exigencies of the occasion.

## **Professor Saushkin's Lecture Tour (25th November-December 6th)**

We were fortunate to have such an eminent geographer from the Soviet Union as Professor Y. G. Saushkin of Moscow University whose intensive tour embraced the universities of Leicester, London, Oxford, Southampton, Surrey, Sussex, and Furzedown College of Education where Society members were kindly invited to attend. Many leading British geographers met Professor Saushkin and we are very grateful to a number of them who so generously provided private hospitality, and to the Royal Geographical Society for the luncheon with the President and Director and for his advice in planning a balanced and varied lecture tour.

## **S.C.R. COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The most important items discussed at the November meeting of the Council—the organisation of the Library and the expansion of the Visual Aids Department—are referred to in the Editorial. The launching of a major financial appeal for expansion of the Society's work was discussed by the E.C. in December (the meeting took place after these notes went to press).

Owing to the pressure of full-time teaching and post-graduate research at Surrey University, Mrs. Saharova has had, we regret, to resign from the Council; we wish her every success in her research and examinations. At the same time we welcome our former secre-

tary, Campbell Creighton, to the Council, but warn him that representing the Society in Moscow will be no sinecure.

## NEW PRINTERS OF THE JOURNAL

The Society was recently informed by the Co-operative Printing Society Limited that their London works would cease production before the end of 1969 and that the Journal would have to find their new jobs. Going to new printers, in this case the Compton new printers. We regret that after so many years of what has virtually been a family relationship the break has come. We wish the management and staff of the CPS best wishes for the future in Press, is a venture into the unknown—for them and us! The current Journal should speak for us both.

## FUTURE EVENTS

*(An outline calendar of future events is printed on page 46)*

### **Lenin Commemorative Lecture**

Maurice Dobb will be giving this lecture on Lenin at the Botany Theatre, University College, London, at 7 p.m., Monday, March 23rd, 1970, before an invited audience of members and friends. Tickets (at no charge) are now available from the office. The lecture will be followed by a Reception at the College (the current circular contains further details).

### **1st-5th April—Holiday and Conference in Switzerland**

Suisse-URSS, France-URSS and the Soviet Union of Friendship Societies and of Societies for Cultural Relations are jointly sponsoring a meeting at GENEVA for representatives of Societies of all those countries where Lenin once lived. Any members interested in attending should contact the Secretary immediately. (The cost, excluding travel to and from Geneva, will be about £45.)

### **The Bolsheviks—Unity Theatre—April 3rd-May 10th**

Unity Theatre, in co-operation with the Society, are presenting this contemporary Soviet play, translated by Robert Daglish, with the opening night on Friday, April 3rd, at 7.45 p.m. There will be three performances per week, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, at 7.45 p.m., until May 10th. Tickets are available from Unity Theatre, 1 Goldington Street, London, N.W.1. (Tel.: 01-387 8647), 2 p.m.–10 p.m. any day, or by post (stamped addressed envelope), price 5s., 7s. 6d., 10s. Please state that you are an S.C.R. member, giving name of affiliated organisation if applicable.

## **Lenin in Film—April 6th, 8.30 p.m., National Film Theatre**

As reported in the last issue of the Journal, the British Film Institute in association with the Society and with Educational and TV Films, Ltd., is sponsoring this lecture by Ivor Montagu, with film excerpts.

The National Film Theatre has extended provisional membership to SCR members for this lecture AND for the Lenin Film Season starting on the same Monday at 6.15 p.m. with a documentary programme. There will be a further six programmes of films (none repeated) at 6.15 and 8.30 p.m. on each of the following three evenings, April 7th, 8th and 9th. Tickets are available from the Box Office of the National Film Theatre, South Bank, London, S.E.1, at 5s., 7s. and 10s., on the production of SCR membership cards. (If booking by post, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope together with your membership card.)

Details of the other programmes are included in the calendar published on page 46.

## **April Edition of the ASJ**

In this special Lenin Anniversary edition will be published new articles of original research containing hitherto unpublished material. One article deals with the attitude of contemporary British newspapers to Lenin while working in Britain and subsequently during the revolutions. Maurice Dobb's commemorative lecture will be published in full and the issue will also include a fascinating account of the medical treatment of Lenin, much of it based on the records of the German and Soviet physicians who attended him.

These and other articles should make this issue an unique contribution to scholarship.

# **Book Reviews**

## **The Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam Conferences: Documents.**

*Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969. 18s.*

This is a welcome collection, comprising the Soviet minutes of the three major war-time conferences between the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A. and Great Britain. The documents are published for the first time in an English edition, in a handy and thankfully reasonably priced volume.

The selection complements the American documents and invites a detailed comparison. The documents reveal both the extent and the difficulties of "the co-operation between the three Great Powers in the anti-Nazi coalition during the war". This should not obscure differences of two kinds. The first reflects favourably upon the Soviet collection. The Soviet records of the conference sessions tend to be fuller than the American minutes. This is explained by the greater detail with which some questions are treated, e.g. the discussion of reparations during the second plenary session at Yalta (pp. 72-8 in the Soviet collection). The other category of differences is much less significant than might be feared, this being the minor discrepancies of fact—were adjustments of the Curzon line in favour of Poland to be 5-6 kms. or 5-8 kms.? There are also a few omissions in the Soviet collection, whether "edited" out or not made at the time is not clear, e.g. the debate over the revision of the Straits convention at the seventh plenary session at Yalta. In general, the Soviet documents confirm conclusions based upon other documents and memoirs, that the political decisions of war-time and those affecting the post-war situation were made elsewhere, at other moments and not by three-power diplomacy.

The size of this volume imposes an unfortunate limitation. We cannot here read the Soviet version of the secondary meetings between political and military advisers of the three partners, nor can we see the preparatory documentation from which the Soviet delegations worked. But to include this material would make a more unweildy collection. Perhaps we shall be soon rewarded with more extensive publication in English of war-time documents from the U.S.S.R.

P. SAVIGEAR  
*University of Leicester.*

**A History of Russia:** by Nicholas V. Riasanovsky.

Second Edition. *Oxford University Press*, 1969. 750 pp. 70s.

Now issued in a second edition which follows the first in all essentials but is expanded on the Soviet period and makes other minor readjustments, Riasanovsky's has already been widely acclaimed in the U.K. and the U.S.A. as among the best general histories of Russia written in English. Among his other achievements, the author makes the reader aware that most of the huge subject with which he deals is still open to discussion, often to controversy. At the same time as making politics and diplomacy the centre of his attention, he does not neglect economic and social change, and largely succeeds in discussing cultural development as an integral part of the whole, rather than taking on an almost meaningless list of names to each section as is the case with many



other textbooks. While he could have been more sympathetic on the Soviet period, his account is far from being the Cold War salvo fired by many of his fellow American academics. Although Sumner's *Survey* is its superior in imaginative insight and Florinsky's *Russia* gives more information on pre-revolutionary Russia as seen by pre-revolutionary historians, Riasanovsky's *History* might be given a higher rating than them and its other competitors because of its comprehensive coverage.

This is no place for petty quibbles about Riasanovsky's interpretation and use of evidence, which are in any case difficult to make because of the thoroughness of his work. But perhaps the opportunity could be taken to compare this author's general approach to that of his Soviet counterparts. For example, they would not talk of the history of Russia, but of the U.S.S.R. This is not just a difference of terminology. It would tend to be so if the reference were to the history of America, rather than to that of the U.S.A., because of the earlier date and lesser seriousness of the American Revolution. Nevertheless, there is a tendency on the part of transatlantic textbooks to consider the colonial period as no more than a prelude to the main theme. Much more marked in the Soviet case is the consideration of the years before 1917 merely as precursors to those after, the fifty or so of which are usually given equal coverage to the whole of previous history. Riasanovsky's ratio is approximately 150 : 500. Moreover, history of the U.S.S.R. rather than of Russia means that all fifteen republics merit separate treatment as well as consideration as part of the Empire or of the Soviet Union. Riasanovsky makes almost no reference to their history before their incorporation and very little to it after. More than elsewhere, the difference of approach to the Soviet period is noteworthy. Riasanovsky's remarks on Marxism and Leninism, their intolerance and their appeal, while far from the crudities that are still often proffered, are nevertheless dismissive of "pseudo science". On the other hand, when Soviet historians cannot themselves achieve a satisfactory account of events from October 1917 onwards, a convincing explanation of Stalin and Stalinism, their Western colleagues cannot be criticised very much on these scores. And in his closing remarks, Riasanovsky is liberal enough to assert that "totalitarianism as such cannot explain the dynamism and development of the U.S.S.R.", although he uses emotive language here too when talking of "the deadly grip on the country" of the C.P.S.U. In other words, Riasanovsky does not always meet the high standards set by E. H. Carr for Western historians of the U.S.S.R., standards which it needs to be said Carr himself has not always observed.

On the whole, Riasanovsky's book is worthwhile reading for all those interested in Russian and Soviet history, both for beginners

and for experts. It contains useful maps and appropriate photographs, and is attractively presented by the Oxford University Press at a price not exorbitant as prices go today.

P. DUKES

*University of Aberdeen.*

**The Roots of Russian Communism** by David Lane.

*Van Gorcum, Holland 1968. 4 gns.*

The sub-title of this book, a social and historical study of Russian Social Democracy, 1898-1907, suggests at first sight that it covers much of the ground already thoroughly examined in a number of standard works. Nevertheless, as one progresses through it, one is driven to concur with the closing words of a long and laudatory review in *The Times Literary Supplement* that "The research which has gone into this book is meticulous; the many broad issues raised make it significant and worth while".

Dr. Lane's central interest is the social composition of the Russian Social Democratic Party during its early development, both in its national and local composition. This involves an analysis of the social bases of the Bolshevik and Menshevik wings of the party, which separated out more or less clearly after the split of 1903. The evidence produced from the detailed study of the seven main local political centres in the Soviet Union shows that they far from uniformly reflected this split. Dr. Lane shows how the relationship between the intellectuals, the gentry, middle class professional, working class and peasant membership of the party varied within the two wings and within the local party organisations. Other significant facts emerge during the analysis; data on the age structure of the membership and the relations between the leadership and the rank and file provide a basis for explaining the strength and weakness of the two wings both within the period analysed and in later developments.

This is a work of great scholarship and, although it is heavily loaded with the academic apparatus of a doctoral dissertation, it is attractively readable throughout. Soviet and British scholars have contributed much to the understanding of the history of the other's country and Dr. Lane's book is an important item on the British side of the balance sheet that still has far to go to achieve a true balance. It is only in very recent years that Soviet historians have begun to tackle in a systematic way the local resources of their history and to subject them to a kind of sociological analysis used by Dr. Lane. Doubtless the time will soon come when his account will have to be supplemented by new information and new assessment. But it will remain meanwhile as a standard work and set a high standard for future writing in this field.

It also serves to give a needed perspective to the early development of the Social Democratic Party which has been lacking in previous accounts of it that have been mainly derived from Menshevik sources in the West. One should also note the fact that considerable help is acknowledged by Dr. Lane from personal contacts with Soviet scholars in the Soviet Union, facilitated by the Society for Cultural Relations. His work is a compelling argument for the need to expand these facilities.

M. HOOKHAM  
*University of Leicester.*

**The U.S.S.R.,** Wright Miller  
*Oxford University Press.* 8s. 6d.

This is an excellent little survey of the Soviet Union, covering its history, geography, politics and economics and is particularly useful as introductory reading for a wide variety of students. Although first published in 1963, the statistical data are revised about every 18 months, so that it remains very much up to date. It also has an excellent bibliography. It is one of the books in the "Modern World Series", edited by Charles Blount, a Birmingham schoolmaster.

J. S. GREGORY  
*Furzedown College.*

**The Politics of Ideas in the USSR**  
Soviet Studies Series, edited by Robert Conquest.  
*The Bodley Head, London, 1967.* 25s.

*The Politics of Ideas in the USSR*, is a welcome addition to this series of studies on various aspects of Soviet life. Its claim to "document and detail the history and the nature of the Soviet system of 'thought-control', of the conscious limitation and guidance of permitted expression in every sphere" (p. 11), is in the main justified, but is marred by the tendentious use of such words as "thought-control", "unpersons" and similar Orwellian-type terminology.

The title is explained by the editor as "a convenient formulation for bringing under one head the various methods employed in the USSR to impose the current ideas of the Party and to suppress all others." (p. 10). As such, the book is a useful addition. It neatly traces and describes the means whereby the expression of ideas is channelled into the desired direction.

Due emphasis is laid on the importance of ideology in the USSR and some account is given of deviations from Marxism. Contrasting Marxist theory with the realities of the Soviet situation has long been a favourite intellectual exercise amongst analysts of the Soviet

scene. But perhaps more attention could have been paid to an attempted explanation of deviations in terms of Soviet attitudes, events, changes in policy and new developments—all of which modify the impression received from a stark contrast between theory and reality. In fact, what is required throughout the book is more analysis to supplement description.

The role of ideology cannot be underestimated; the book covers in a useful and informative manner the influence of ideology on the development of Soviet economics, philosophy, psychology, education, literature and history for the first thirty-five years or so of the Soviet regime. This is essential background to current developments in these spheres.

It is unfortunate, however, that there should be some inconsistency in the book as regards tracing the development of control here. The fields of philosophy, literature and history are examined in both the pre-1953 and post-Stalin periods, in a critical and informative fashion. Thus, there is a necessary continuity. But the areas of economics, psychology and education are sadly neglected. Their earlier development is described in varying detail, but that of the post-Stalin period receives virtually no attention at all.

“No general textbook on economics was published between 1928 and 1954. The Soviet economist lost his independence and became part of the mechanism of State.” (p. 21), is the concluding note for economics. And yet the post-Stalin period is a most interesting one from the economist’s point of view: controversies involving opposing views within the Party leadership over such fundamentals as economic priorities, planning, prices, incentives and industrial organization have been raging for some time now and involve a serious re-appraisal of certain tenets of Marxian economics concerning profit and value. Is it possible, then, to conclude on such a barren note as above? Is it possible to ignore such phenomena as the virgin soils campaign of the ’fifties, industrial re-organization, the issues over heavy and light industry, and such names as *Novozhilov*, *Kantorovich* and *Lieberman*? Without some mention of the above any detailed documentation of the control of thought and ideas in the field of economics can only be incomplete and misleading.

Psychology is summarised thus: “Interesting experimental work, such as the study of pairs of identical twins, was stopped after 1936. Psychology became an applied science, an ancillary arm of the State.” (p. 30). This is all very well as far as it goes, but is incomplete, to say the least. One cannot refrain from asking the question, “And what has the situation in psychology been like for the last ten years, say?” Surely there have been some interesting developments in this field, as there have been in the social sciences in the Soviet Union? And any answer to the above question must provide

us with a deeper insight into the nature of “thought-control” and its effect as regards the study of psychology in the USSR.

The account of education is not only inconclusive, but simplified to an extreme : “Here it need only be pointed out that the shift in Soviet educational thought ran parallel to those in other disciplines—from determinism to activism, from idealism to realism, from the hopes raised by progressive theory to the realities of social demand”, (p. 30). Is this not an over-simplification? Education is an important factor in the moulding of social attitudes, in the creation of built-in limitations on thought, and in the Soviet context deserves far more attention. More mention of Soviet educational theory and the debates it has undergone—the reforms of 1958, for example—an examination of educational curricula, subjects available, time spent on them and the end products would certainly leave us with a more accurate and fuller impression of “thought-control” in the field of Soviet education.

The description of the system of censorship among all forms of mass media in Chapter 4, serves as a most useful reference work. The links between the Central Committee of the CPSU via its agitation and propaganda departments and ideological commissions, and between such media as publishing, films and radio, is well-documented here. Of particular interest is the discussion of the role of *Glavlit* in the Soviet censorship system. In the section on freedom of the press and publishing, however, one feels the need for more mention of Soviet attitudes to the press etc., instead of such bald statements as “Since the Communist Party ultimately controls all organizations, ‘freedom of the Press’ is non-existent in the Soviet Union.” (p. 54). This may be the case, but surely the reader is justified in asking for some discussion of Soviet views on the press, so that he can form a balanced view?

The book deserves similar mention for its coverage of and informativeness on the press, literature and broadcasting, which play such an important part in the life of the Soviet Union. A minor point as regards radio and television broadcasting must be made. Much is said here about the hours devoted to transmissions in foreign languages and the importance of visual communications; however, one feels that a programmes analysis would bring out more clearly the role of broadcasting in the “thought-control” process. An enumeration of distortions and misinterpretations of the truth as carried out by Soviet radio and television programmes is of some use, admittedly, but more revealing would be the answer to such questions as : how many hours of a programme are devoted to news, amusement, leisure, education, politics and propaganda? At what sections of the population are the programmes aimed?

Party schools and institutions and the carrying out of propaganda among the masses is adequately examined. It is surprising, though,

that no mention is made of the Pioneer and Komsomol organizations. These are important enough to merit some attention in any discussion on the control of ideas. It is a general criticism of the book that it neglects very much the influence exerted on young maturing minds.

*The Politics of Ideas in the USSR* can be said to be a valid contribution to works on Soviet Russia. Although it contains little that is new, the compact presentation of information makes it a useful reference work. It is spoiled somewhat by erratic organization and a tendency to place more emphasis on the formal means of control, whereas more analysis would render a fuller picture. But with a little care the reader will be able to gain much from its perusal.

JOHN MURRAY  
*University of Aberdeen.*

**Prospects for Soviet Society, Allen Kassof (Ed.).**  
*Pall Mall, 1968. 586 pp. 84s.*

This collection of articles on contemporary Soviet society is divided into five parts. First come two essays by Allen Kassof and Cyril E. Black which attempt to evaluate the USSR against her past and in comparison with other societies. Second, we have five articles on the formation and control of policy: most of the writers here already have established reputations in the field of Soviet studies—Jeremy R. Azrael, Sidney Ploss, Leon Lipson, Thomas W. Wolfe and Vernon Aspaturian. Part Three is concerned with “resources and their management”: population changes, education, agriculture, industry, and science. The fourth part describes the changing Soviet social structure with articles by Robert Feldmesser on “stratification and communism”, Mark Field and David Anderson on “the family and social problems”, Paul Hollander on “leisure”, and James Billington on “the intellectuals”. The final section describes the role of the USSR in the international community and possible future developments.

The book is well balanced and provides a panorama of Soviet society which most students will find useful. Perhaps the most obvious omissions are studies of the social services, trade unions and labour relations, but as the book is not meant to be an encyclopaedia, one cannot take the editor to task for this. As with all symposia, the quality of the articles varies: but generally the standard of writing is high. The book deserves a place in any sixth-form or college library where students are studying the contemporary USSR.

DAVID LANE  
*University of Essex.*

**Sholokhov:** by C. G. Bearne

*Oliver and Boyd, 1969. 113 pp. 12s.*

Mikhail Sholokhov is without doubt one of the outstanding writers of our time, whose works have been published in over 30 million copies in more than 60 languages. In his epic novels *Quiet Flows the Don* and *Virgin Soil Uplturned* he has told of the impact of war, revolution and social change on the Cossack communities of southern Russia. In his short story *Destiny of a Man* he has distilled the anguish that World War Two brought to tens of thousands of his countrymen. His contribution to world literature was recently recognised by the award of a Nobel Prize.

Mr. Bearne, a distinguished member of our Society and of the Editorial Board of this journal, has written an informed, stimulating and eminently readable study of Sholokhov and his work, the first of its kind by a British scholar. Mr. Bearne is to be congratulated. So, too, are his publishers, for having in this way given encouragement to British studies in this field instead of being content merely to re-publish work done in other countries.

Mr. Bearne has gathered together the scattered and surprisingly scant biographical data about his subject. He goes on to trace the "biography" of his major works—*Tales from the Don*, the great novels *Quiet Flows the Don* and *Virgin Soil Uplturned*, the still-incomplete World War Two novel *They Fought for their Country* and the short story *Destiny of a Man*. He recalls the first critical Soviet reactions to Sholokhov's work, and discusses changes made in successive editions.

Sholokhov has in recent years made widely-publicised attacks on Soviet writers and others who in his view "eat Soviet bread but want to serve Western bourgeois masters". His works are frequently cited by Soviet critics as models of "Socialist Realist" writing.

So it is salutary to be reminded that Part 1 of *Quiet Flows the Don* was at first rejected, and that it violates the precepts of the vulgarised "Socialist Realism" preached by those Soviet critics who take a mechanistic view of the social role of literature. Certainly its central character, Melekhov, is very far from being the "positive hero" so dear to the hearts of such critics.

It is salutary, too, to be reminded that when it did appear, Sholokhov, then in his early 20s, was assailed by leftist critics in the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP) as "ideologically unstable" and a "petty-bourgeois intellectual and fellow-traveller" who idealised the realities of Cossack life and propagated *kulak* ideas.

To this it may be added that similar criticisms of Sholokhov's work were recently voiced by critics in People's China, following the "Cultural Revolution" in that country.

In discussing Sholokhov's convictions as a Communist, Mr. Bearne is at pains to stress his "sincerity". But it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that there is no real appreciation of the nature of Sholokhov's commitment. "We cannot say," writes Mr. Bearne, "what prompted him to go along so wholeheartedly with what was in his youth, a minority dictatorship." Such a remark reveals a yawning gulf of incomprehension between author and subject, a complete failure to comprehend the historical and social conditions which gave rise to the October Revolution and the forces at work in it. Likewise, the term "minority dictatorship" as applied to the Republic of Sholokhov's youth, which had but recently emerged from civil war and expelled the last of the interventionist armies, suggests political prejudice rather than balanced appraisal.

Likewise, the comment that Sholokhov has "perforce followed the mood of the majority of his own contemporaries" in "the inevitable clash of generations which has arisen in post-Stalin Russia" does not fully reflect the complexities of the present-day situation. There are many of Sholokhov's own contemporaries—Tvardovsky or Katayev, for example, or the late Ilya Ehrenburg or the late Konstantin Paustovsky—who do not share Sholokhov's attitudes. On the other hand, there are much younger men who do. The clash is in fact not one of generations but of political estimates and appraisals, of differing views regarding the relationship between art, the artist and society.

Mr. Bearne's discussion of changes in successive editions of Sholokhov's major novels is of great interest. The motives seem to have varied considerably—usually a desire to polish up the language, the morals or the politics. In most cases Mr. Bearne's point is well made; in others, the examples do not always bear out the conclusions drawn. An examination of the omissions made in translations made in Britain would be no less interesting.

This slim, attractively-produced book is a valuable contribution to our knowledge, and provides an excellent companion to the reading of the Soviet writer's works. Few will disagree with Mr. Bearne's conclusion: "No-one has succeeded, as Sholokhov has, in tying the events of his own time to the lives of the common people of his own time . . . it must be said and will be said in years to come that Sholokhov is *the* writer of the epic novel in Russia in this century."

DENNIS OGDEN  
*Regent St. Polytechnic.*

**The Stormy Life of Laz Roitshvantz**, by Ilya Ehrenburg  
*Elek Books, 1965. 25s.*

This book, reprinted in translation here a few years ago, being pirated in U.S.A. previously, is something of a literary curiosity.



It was first published in Paris in 1928 while Ehrenburg was abroad and is a picaresque tale in the full ironical style of its author, the style he applied to the more subtle and famous "Julie Jurenita", the satire which so amused Lenin.

Lazik Roitshvantz, its hero—or anti-hero—is a sort of Jewish Schweik, with a touch or two of *Candide* in his make-up. We follow his adventures through many countries as he escapes many frying-pans, only to fall into yet hotter fires: from Gomel to Moscow to Poland to Germany to France to England and finally to Palestine, where things turn out worst of all. He is not quite as indestructible as Schweik for he expires at the end just as he is making up his mind to go back.

From the moment he is started on his travels by getting in bad with the local police through sighing in the wrong place in front of a poster in Gomel, we follow his escapes, both hairbreadth and romantic—for most of his liaisons are involuntary, Laz remaining steadfast, at least in imagination, to his *Dulcinea* Fanny Horshanovich, the cantor's indifferent daughter—paint an almost inconceivable gallery of horror-portraits of the days between the wars: Soviet dance club secretaries, enormous girls bent on marriage to get living space, confidence tricksters, pretending to be writers or critics; Polish pans and colonels; German bourgeois sausage makers, spectacular film producers, pious Rabbis and orthodox snobs; whiteguard emigré crooks and millionaire eccentrics in Paris; philanthropic clergymen and benign-seeming Scotland Yard Special Branch detectives in Britain; and finally the seething not very appetitising Jewish emigration in Palestine.

Ehrenburg knew his onions, or rather he had met a sufficient number and variety of unsavoury people in the course of his own somewhat stormy life, for his gall-tipped pen to bring this succession of caricatures sufficiently to life to strike home. The picture of 1920s' Europe, atypical though it be, is recognisable enough for its truth to be not only amusing but instructive. This is not surprising, but what perhaps is is the author's tenderness for Lazik, the little runt who is the object of all these mischances, but who retains a love of simplicity and integrity—both Jewish and human—despite all the corruption around him, and the occasional introduction of touching Jewish legend narrated by Laz to give pause to his enemies. The translation, by the late Alec Brown, is excellent.

IVOR MONTAGU.

# AGM

The AGM will be held on Saturday, 23rd May, at 3 p.m. until 5.30 p.m. at the Cavendish Hotel, 78 Lancaster Gate, London, W.2. Nominations to the Council (not exceeding 20 in number) can be made by each member or affiliated body, need not be seconded, but must reach the Secretary not later than Saturday, 18th April.

Those attending the meeting are invited by the Soviet Embassy to a film show and refreshments afterwards.



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